

THE POWER OF TOUCH IN THE LAYING ON OF HANDS
AS A TRANSFER AGENT
FOR IMPARTATION

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ABSTRACT

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Providing clarity of knowledge about the doctrine, practice, and efficacy of the laying on of hands for impartation is at the heart of this project. The hypothesis is that teaching with practical application clarifies the participants' knowledge and understanding of the laying on of hands for impartation and encourages personal participation in this ritual. Select churches in northern New Jersey are the context for this qualitative study. Components for triangulation, analysis, and interpretation of data include formal observations, pre and post-teaching questionnaires, and focus group discussions regarding the participants' clarity of knowledge and attitudes.

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ABBREVIATIONS

CAM	Complementary and Alternative Medicine
HGCF	Heaven's Gate Christian Fellowship
LoH	Laying on of Hands
Pre-T	Pre-teaching Questionnaire
Post-T	Post-teaching Questionnaire
SC	Summit Church
SLWM	Spirit and Life Word Ministries
TT	Therapeutic Touch

INTRODUCTION

For nearly forty years the researcher of this project has been regularly attending Pentecostal and Charismatic churches and conferences where congregations are often asked to extend hands toward a person or thing during prayer, or asked to impose hands on people while praying for them. While this is a regular and normative practice in these contexts, sermons or teaching that address the doctrine of the laying on of hands have rarely been presented. Identified as an elementary doctrine in Hebrews 6:2, the laying on of hands seems to have been relegated to the dusty corner of assumption where hands are imposed for prayer ostensibly out of tradition. Even so, direct teaching about the doctrine of the laying on of hands is so rare as to be virtually invisible.

Throughout the history of Christianity, hands have been regularly imposed for blessing, ordination, empowerment, infilling of the Holy Spirit, and impartation of *charismata*. The practice of the laying on of hands in recent history has been particularly brought to the forefront among Pentecostals and Charismatics, and currently even more so among Third Wave Charismatics (Neo-Charismatics). Spiritual experiences among these traditions have generated a variety of beliefs about the efficacy of the laying on of hands, some biblically sound. Others articulate misunderstandings about who should lay hands on whom, with what expectations, and to what effect. Recent emphasis on impartation within Third Wave circles seems to warrant teaching the fundamentals of the doctrine of imposition of hands as both relevant and even necessary.

Literature about the Pentecostal/Charismatic experience tangential to imposition of hands abounds, but specific research literature on the ritual and practice of the laying on of hands is sparse. With very few exceptions, explicit literature about the practice of the laying on of hands among those who regularly practice this ritual is often relegated to casual mention within the framework of its intended context. In more traditional denominations, the laying on of hands is mentioned as part of liturgical rituals typically in the context of certain sacraments (i.e. baptism, confirmation, chrismation, marriage, extreme unction) with little explanation of its purpose.

Possibly as a result of neglected teaching, conversations through the years have yielded various and inconsistent ideas. Some say only ordained clergy should lay hands on people, while others claim that any Christian has authority to lay hands on people as they pray. Some state that the main purpose of the laying on of hands is to serve as a cultural ritual to show concern or compassion, whereas others state that the laying on of hands serves as a transfer agent for spiritual effects from God through human touch.

Confusing and conflicting statements like these have prompted the inquiry as to their validity in terms of sound biblical and theological support, and the degree to which teaching on the topic might have a positive effect. Because impartation is a supernatural experience originating with the divine, the project has had no intention of testing the sovereignty of God, particularly in the teaching and application phase of the project. Rather, it sought to inquire about the human experience when touched by the divine and the role humans have in receiving divine impartations. Clarity and focus has been applied specifically regarding touch with impartation in this research project.

Chapter one presents the synergy of the personal interest, context, and purpose for the project. Motivation of the researcher and the church partners involved in the project are described, along with the socio-economics, ethos, and demographics of the church settings. For this study, the target context is select northern New Jersey churches characterized as Third Wave (Neo-Charismatic). They were chosen because they are most likely to be open to engage in the ritual of the laying on of hands as normative and regular practice among congregants. Prior exposure to the ritual of laying on of hands in a normative Christian context, as would be in these Third Wave churches, provides raw data as to their existing beliefs, attitudes, and experiences prior to instruction, and again afterwards. Congregations in the region were selected with preference for diversity in such areas as ethos, cultural construct, and demographics, but ultimately the participation hinged on leadership agreement, timing, and availability for the project to take place at a particular location. Although each church is unique, they have commonality in that each one welcomes the supernatural work and move of the Holy Spirit.

The biblical foundations for the doctrine of the laying on of hands discussed in the second chapter focuses on Numbers 27:15–23 and Mark 1:40–45 as biblical examples in which the laying on of hands was significantly utilized. The exegetical analysis of these two scriptural passages provides the grounding for the laying on of hands for impartation. Furthermore, the analysis seeks to establish scriptural precedence for the continuation of this practice. For each pericope, the historical and cultural setting provides a context. An analysis of the literary structure, motifs, and themes provides further insight. First, the Old Testament pericope in Numbers 27:15–23, which describes Moses laying hands on Joshua for his commissioning as the new leader just prior to the entrance of the Israelites

into the promised land of Canaan, is analyzed. The second passage is the New Testament story in Mark 1:40–45. In this pericope, Jesus heals a leper. Touch is both significant and efficacious in this episode. The incident also appears in Matthew 8:2–4 and Luke 5:12–16. In both the Old and New Testament pericopes, albeit very different, the laying on of hands is significant and the recipient of the laying on of hands received something. Joshua received an impartation for leadership, and the leper received an impartation of healing and cleansing.

Chapter three introduces the historical foundation that traces the occurrences, contexts, and evolution of the practice of the laying on of hands for charismatic impartation (i.e. receiving spiritual gifts, blessing, healing, commissioning). It demonstrates that imposition of hands has been a normative practice among Christians from the earliest times, continued throughout the centuries from ancient to modern times, and gained significant momentum as a ritual and common practice among various Pentecostal and Charismatic groups that emerged from revivals during the twentieth century. This historical foundation also addresses significant movements and individuals associated with the practice of the imposition of hands for receiving impartation of *charismata*, and those that have influenced the evolution of the practice from imposition of hands by Christian clergy to a more inclusive use among all believers in general.

The theological foundation presented in the fourth chapter concerns itself with the doctrine of the laying on of hands as well as the theological concepts that support it. This chapter unravels related issues such as the nature of impartation and transference, and the relationship between the imposition of hands and sacramental activity. Because impartation of *charismata*, healing, the infilling of the Spirit, blessing, and

commissioning are works of the Spirit in the lives of believers, they reflect the presence and person of the Holy Spirit. Consequently, pneumatological and ecclesiological concepts invariably find their way into the narrative. The discussion specifically focuses on the work of the Triune God, particularly the work of the Holy Spirit in the Church as the extravagant giver of power and gifts. Furthermore, this chapter delves into the Church's partnership with the Holy Spirit in which the Church has the opportunity to participate in giving through the laying on of hands and prayer.

Chapter five deals with theoretical foundations, which takes into consideration related information from a variety of disciplines. Literature from the domain of religions certainly qualifies, but may have some limitations. Voices from disciplines discussed in this chapter, such as sociology, psychology, history, medicine, and even New Age philosophy, inform theoretical perspectives on impartation by touch and its importance to humanity.

Chapter six discusses the methodology and outcomes of the research. It describes the tools and strategies for accessing, collecting, and analyzing data collected during the field experience of the project. The methodology includes description of the type of field research; the instruments of measurement and the procedures for collecting data; and the process used for disaggregation and analysis of the data. Discussion of the project outcomes includes the results of the collected data in terms of overall response, as well as disaggregated data by stated variables. Qualitative and quantitative data from observations, questionnaires, and focus group discussions are also presented. Triangulation of data from the various types of inquiry instruments is analyzed,

explained, and utilized to draw conclusions aimed at the verification of the hypothesis. Recommendations for future research are also addressed.

Lastly, the conclusions and reflections for the project in chapter six integrate the many components of the researcher's journey of understanding throughout the research, field experiences, and its outcomes. Conclusions are drawn from the integration of all of the elements of the research and field experience. The reflections are the musings in terms of the value, significance, and impact of the project on the researcher, the context, and beyond.

CHAPTER ONE

SYNERGY

Introduction

When the personal experiences of life intersect with ministry, each profoundly influences the other with deep and lasting meaning. The experiences provide the perspective for the ministry, and as its corollary, the ministry provides the vehicle for the perspective to be tested, verified, and/or changed. As an intersection of theory and practice, action research similarly offers opportunities to test, verify, and/or change some aspect of an existing circumstance, issue, or paradigm.

Action projects ideally should also be a win-win for all of the stakeholders. The researcher has the satisfaction of developing and seeing the project through to completion, as well as gleaning powerful and transformative learning from the experience. The congregations and church leaders also gain from the experience in having an opportunity to take an objective “third eye” look at some aspect of their church life, and in so doing, may find the project an enriching experience in their Christian walk. All of the stakeholders benefit from the experience of having a significant dialogue about the stated goals, and they gain new insights as the project unfolds. The importance of this personalized view is that perceptions on issues of importance to the individuals emerge and have the opportunity to change through common experience and dialogue.

Motivation for selecting this topic for the project finds its roots in the researcher's life. The details of deeply personal experiences of supernatural impartation will remain private between God and the researcher. The impact of these experiences, however, has been transformative and provokes a desire to see others experience such transformation by the power of the Holy Spirit.

For the researcher, some of those times of impartation were accompanied by the laying on of hands and some have not. The intent of pursuing this project is not to tease out the reasons for why it occurs sometimes with laying on of hands and other times not. Rather, the intent is to establish the practice of the laying on of hands as a credible and efficacious ritual when praying for impartation even though it is not a requirement for receiving divine impartation.

Ministry Context

Action research, as its name implies, requires a targeted group, system, or paradigm. The church contexts that have been chosen to participate in the research draw from friendship and working relationships with their leaders. Because of positive relationships developed over years of interaction, the researcher has the benefit of firsthand knowledge of the inner workings of the churches as projected ministry contexts, their ethos, and history. As partners in the project, church leaders were invited to give approval, instrumental support, and feedback for the project.

For this project's analysis, it is important to describe the county more so than the context towns because the churches described in this analysis, typical of the region, draw congregants from the surrounding communities within their county more so than the town

in which they are located. This trend is also true of the other counties in northern New Jersey. As a sixty year resident of northern New Jersey, the researcher attests to the general attitude of the residents that typically connect their sense of belonging more to the general area than to a particular town, and this accounts for a great deal of mobility within the county itself and its neighboring counties. Included in the contextual analysis are the socio-economic attributes and demographics of Bergen County, New Jersey, which are also characteristic of neighboring counties. The ethos of each church involved in the project is also described.

Northern New Jersey

If New York City is the Big Apple, northern New Jersey is the branch that holds it. As noted above, highlighting Bergen County provides a typical profile of the neighboring counties that are much the same due to its regional flavor and joint history from the colonial period onward. Because of its location in the northeast corner of the state, connected to New York by the George Washington Bridge over the Hudson River, most Bergen County residents consider it a bedroom community for “the City,” as it is commonly called. The culture, attitude, and diversity of New York City and Bergen County are almost indistinguishable, and Bergen residents are as comfortable navigating Manhattan as they are in their own neighborhoods.

New Jersey, the “Crossroads of the Revolution,” as it is commonly known, has a long history dating to the early seventeenth century and Bergen County was one of the

earliest settlements established by the Dutch in 1660.¹ During the Revolutionary War, more battles were fought in New Jersey than any other state, and Bergen County was the route for the famous retreat of George Washington from New York. Bergen County can truly say, “Washington slept here.” Table 1.1 provides a snapshot of the region and reveals a highly diverse and densely populated area.

Table 1.1. U.S. Census Bureau Data for Bergen County, NJ, 2007–2011²

Land area	233 sq. mi.
Total Population out of 8.8 million in New Jersey	918,000
Persons per square mile	3,884
Population under 18 years of age	22%
Population 65 years of age or older	15%
Population – foreign born	28%
Population who speak a language other than English in the home	37%
Population – White	76%
Population – Black	6.6%
Population – Latino	16.8%
Population – Asian	15%
Population – high school education or higher	91%
Population – B.A. degree or higher	45%
Population below poverty level	6%
Median value of owner occupied housing	\$474,200
Per capita income	\$43,012
Median household income	\$83,443
Total business firms	106,754
Number of colleges and universities	7

Because of its proximity to New York City, many New Jersey residents work in New York. Tragically, this residency had a profound effect on the region when the 9/11 terrorist attack on the World Trade Center occurred. Most Bergen communities lost residents in the tragedy and it still evokes painful memories during memorial events.

¹ The State of New Jersey, “A Short History of New Jersey,” *The Official Website for the State of New Jersey*, accessed April 12, 2013, http://www.nj.gov/nj/about/history/short_history.html.

² United States Census Bureau, “State and County Quickfacts: Bergen County, New Jersey,” *U.S. Department of Commerce, United States Census Bureau*, accessed April 4, 2014, <http://quickfacts.census.gov/qfd/states/34/34003.html>.

Residents have a reputation of moving at a fast pace and displaying tough attitudes. Nevertheless, as a suburb of New York City and having access to its best attributes, the benefits outweigh the deficits. Easy access to New York offers world-class cultural venues for the performing arts, several of the world's finest museums, three major airports, and dozens of universities. However, many inner-city residents in poorer neighborhoods of the region typically do not take advantage of these venues unless they are accessed through schools.

Seventy municipalities are represented in Bergen County and the city of Hackensack is the county seat. Town borders are indistinguishable to visitors due to the density of population and the manner in which towns are adjacent to one another. Often only residents know their town's borders as they are commonly situated across a local street. The highway systems are difficult to follow for non-residents because the complex road networks date back to the early colonial period where roads randomly cut around farmland borders. Federally registered historical homes that are centuries old can be found in several municipalities, some privately owned. Although some are private residences, most are owned by local historical societies that maintain the buildings and provide historical information and tours.

Most of the suburban municipalities in the northwestern part of the county are very affluent and have spacious homes on sprawling properties. Communities in the eastern and southern sections of the county sprang up during the Industrial Revolution as the shift from Dutch farms to industrial centers changed the landscape. Small homes on minimum-sized lots and crowded apartment buildings were built near factories to house thousands of workers. Waves of immigrants at the turn of the twentieth century settled in

the small cities where unskilled labor was needed and jobs were available. These municipalities still provide havens for new immigrant and low-income families. The end of World War II sparked a surge of building communities of small Cape Cod style homes on quarter-acre lots carved out of available space. These smaller homes typically provide a “first house” residence for young families.

Throughout Bergen County, life is anything but homogenous. Neighborhood pockets of various cultural and ethnics groups are found throughout the county. It is easy to find grocery stores and restaurants featuring authentic foods from places like Ethiopia, the Middle East, Poland, Brazil, Dominican Republic, Philippines, Peru, and Korea, just to name a few. Multilingual signs for shops are commonplace.

Religious life is also diverse. Besides the 274 Christian churches of various denominations listed in directories, eight Jewish synagogues, two Hindu temples, a Buddhist temple, a Sikh temple, six Baha’i temples, five Islamic mosques, a monastery, and an Ethical Culture Society building dot the landscape. In addition, dozens of small churches and home church groups that are not listed in any directories are accessible.

Some communities have more churches of one denomination than another based on the dominant ethnicity of the town or neighborhood. For example, the towns in the southern part of the county have more Roman Catholic and Eastern Orthodox churches where a larger population of Italian, Polish, Ukrainian, and Spanish residents live, whereas the northwestern part has more Protestant churches of various traditions reflecting a greater number of inhabitants of Dutch, English, and German heritage. African-American congregations tend to be found in the larger cities and fewer in the suburbs. Pentecostal and Charismatic churches, comprised mainly of Hispanic and

African-American adherents, are few in number and are not concentrated in any particular part of the county. Synagogue locations are dependent on the level of orthodoxy of the congregation. Ultra-orthodox groups like the Chasidim and Lubavichers are required by their religious beliefs to live within walking distance of their synagogue because they do not drive vehicles on the Sabbath. Consequently, their homes are located in tightly knit orthodox neighborhoods near their synagogue. Mosques and Hindu temples tend to be located in the cities where one finds neighborhoods of Middle Eastern, Indian or Pakistani ethnicity. A growing number of Korean Protestant churches of various traditions are currently springing up in the suburban communities.

Passaic County, a neighbor of Bergen County, is very similar in diversity, and these two counties are virtually indistinguishable from each other, especially in the border municipalities. The major difference between the counties is that Passaic County has two large cities, Passaic and Paterson. Passaic, having the same name as the county, is a city of about 65,000 people and Paterson, its county seat, is the third largest city in New Jersey having approximately 150,000 people. Both are densely populated and were once the home of several industries during the Industrial Revolution and the subsequent manufacturing boom of the early twentieth century.

The city of Passaic was known for its woolen mills and Paterson is still called the “Silk City” because of its many silk producing factories that closed decades ago. Due to the decline of industry and closing of dozens of plants, both cities have suffered urban decay, but in recent years, revitalization efforts have taken place. Both cities have typical inner-city conditions including poverty, drug-related issues, overcrowded poor

neighborhoods, a burgeoning number of new immigrants who have difficulty navigating an English speaking society, and large numbers of single-parent families.

Like Bergen County, Passaic County has a wide variety of houses of worship. Paterson in particular is home to a large Syrian, Lebanese, and Turkish Muslim community and several new mosques have recently emerged. Paterson's location, bordering the city of Passaic and within short driving distance to Bergen County suburban municipalities, gives its residents scores of options to attend churches in either Passaic or Bergen County. Although Passaic and Paterson have many similarities, Passaic has a proportionately greater Hispanic composition, while Paterson has a larger African-American population.

Summit Church (SC), Hackensack, NJ

Located in Hackensack, New Jersey, the county seat of Bergen County, Summit Church (SC) is uniquely positioned to minister in a highly diverse city. Hackensack is twenty minutes from New York City with a population of about 45,000. It has a multicultural, multiethnic, and multiracial mix. As the county seat, the city houses the county's large court complex and a lively business district.

Summit Church's congregation of approximately 150 people reflects the demographics of the city and its surrounding communities, having a multicultural and multiracial representation. Established in 2009, SC was formed through the merger of two smaller congregations led by two couples who formed the pastoral team. One of the couples has recently moved to Illinois, leaving the other couple as the senior pastoral staff. The current pastors of SC have at least thirty years of ministry experience and bring

a profound expertise in teaching. They value the operation of the gifts of the Spirit and seek to encourage the church to grow in their gifts. Wise leadership accounts for the remarkable unity that has occurred as the two original congregations blended.

Summit Church is strongly mission-minded in supporting foreign missions and serves the local community in outreach programs. The church offers the congregants a broad range of opportunities for involvement. Although the congregation is multicultural, all services and church functions are conducted in English. The church community is comprised of a wide variety of age groups, singles, couples, and families. It has an active and healthy youth group that is led by youth pastors who are passionate and committed to their young charges.

Heaven's Gate Christian Fellowship (HGCF) and Spirit and Life Word Ministries (SLWM), Passaic, NJ

Heaven's Gate Christian Fellowship (HGCF) is located in Passaic, New Jersey. This congregation is predominantly first generation Hispanic with very few who are not of Hispanic origin. Consequently, many of the adult congregants have limited English fluency. However, due to schooling, their children are more comfortable with speaking English than Spanish.

In order to accommodate the language diversity, the church offers bilingual services and is especially sensitive to providing interpretation wherever it is feasible both orally and in print matter. The challenge in this situation is to avoid having two separate and distinct congregations based on language choice and fluency. Worship music is both English and Spanish, and the preaching is in English and interpreted in Spanish or vice

versa. Youth and children's ministries are conducted in English. Fellowship events draw from both language groups and offer opportunities for cross cultural exchange.

Although the church was founded rather recently in 2010, the pastors have many years of experience in ministry. Many of the older congregants hail from the Spanish Pentecostal tradition, which is occasionally expressed in music and worship style.

However, the pastors are more inclined to lead and promote a more contemporary Third Wave Charismatic (Neo-Charismatic) ethos. The church is a member of the Apostolic Network of Global Awakening, headquartered in Mechanicsburg, Pennsylvania.

Heaven's Gate has a strong children's ministry serving the large number of children within its immediate Spanish community. HGCF's vision is to expand their congregation to reflect a more multiethnic construct and more closely reflect the diversity of the region.

Spirit and Life Word Ministries (SLWM) is also located in Passaic, New Jersey, but in a very different neighborhood from HGCF. The surrounding neighborhood of SLWM is predominantly ultra-orthodox Jewish. Therefore, the church draws its congregation from areas beyond the immediate neighborhood in surrounding towns, including those in Bergen County. It is a small Charismatic church of approximately fifty congregants and reflects diversity in ethnicity, culture, and race. Their founding pastors have been leading the church for more than twenty-five years. Spirit and Life Word Ministries' began with an ethos typical of the Word of Faith orientation aligned with Rhema Bible Training Center founded by Kenneth Hagin, but in more recent years, it has shifted its style and overall message to that of Third Wave Charismatics with close ties to the Apostolic Network of Global Awakening, founded by Randy Clark. Leaders at

SLWM emphasize the supernatural empowerment of the Holy Spirit in their services as well as outreach events.

CHAPTER TWO

BIBLICAL FOUNDATIONS

Introduction

Christianity in the twentieth century has seen the noteworthy and steady increase of membership in Pentecostalism and Charismatic tradition, and it is continuing to expand into this century. In the 2006 research by demographers indicate that Pentecostal/Charismatic membership for the twentieth century was at an astonishing 600 million.³ In 2011, the number had risen to 614 million.⁴ As Vinson Synan states, “With the twenty-first century in full swing, the growth of the Spirit-empowered movement shows no signs of slowing down.”⁵

Pentecostal/Charismatic Christianity focuses on experiential manifestations such as speaking in tongues, healing, gifts of the Spirit, and supernatural signs and wonders in contrast to the rationalism of the Age of Enlightenment or Modern Era that seeks to explain faith through logic and empirical analysis. Besides being a global Christian phenomenon, Charismatic movements have brought a renewed interest in related practices such as the laying on of hands, accompanied with the belief in supernatural

³ Henry I. Lederle, *Theology with Spirit: The Future of the Pentecostal & Charismatic Movements in the Twenty-first Century* (Tulsa, OK: Word & Spirit Press, 2010), 2.

⁴ Vinson Synan, *Spirit-Empowered Christianity in the 21st Century* (Lake Mary, FL: Charisma House, 2011), 17.

⁵ Synan, vii.

impartation through the use of this custom.⁶ Biblical foundation for the ritual of the laying on of hands and its accompanying concept of impartation provides the legitimacy and credibility for this praxis.

Meaning of Hands in Scripture

The Bible contains over thirteen hundred biblical references to hands. When referring to hand or hands in a biblical context, some meanings are literal and some are figurative.⁷ The laying on of hands includes symbolic use when referring to the “hand of the Lord,” as well as references to the laying on of hands by humans for a variety of contexts. In some contexts, the laying on of hands is found to show ownership or possession, formidable strength, and/or being in command, while in others, it is associated with evil.⁸ Some uses can indicate virtue or blamelessness, while others for making oaths or covenants, and still others, the literal uses are simply for work.⁹

In Hebrew, *yad* for hand is used both literally for the body part, and metaphorically to mean “strength, power, instrument, or authority.”¹⁰ The “hand of the Lord,” usually refers to the Lord’s blessings and empowerment as in Jeremiah 1:9, and is often connected to prophecy; however, texts like that of Ezra 7:28 refer to judgment.¹¹

⁶ Lederle, 8–14.

⁷ Steven R. Service, “Laying on of Hands,” in *Encyclopedia of Pentecostal and Charismatic Christianity*, ed. Stanley M. Burgess (New York, NY: Berkshire, 2006), 229.

⁸ Service, 229.

⁹ Service, 229.

¹⁰ Stephen D. Renn, ed., *Expository Dictionary of Bible Words: Word Studies for Key English Bible Words* (Peabody, MA: Hendrickson, 2005), 462.

¹¹ Renn, 462.

Moreover, the hand of God is found in references that establish David's lineage as the divinely empowered government of Jesus as in Psalm 89:20–37.¹²

Laying hands on sacrificial animals in priestly ceremonies is found in Leviticus, Numbers, and Deuteronomy. As a symbol of authority, the use of the hand(s) is found with references to both man and God.¹³ “‘The hand of the Lord’ is also referred to in regard to the prophetic endowment of the Spirit of God in preparation for the prophet to receive the divine word,”¹⁴ as found in Jeremiah 1:9 and Ezekiel 1:3; 3:14; 8:14; 37:1; 40:1. Furthermore, the hand of God is seen repeatedly as delivering the nation of Israel “out of the hand of their enemies.”¹⁵ Divine creativity is associated with God's hand in several references as well.

The human hand is used not only to bless, but at times against someone or a group. For example, Moses stretches his hands against Egypt in Exodus 7:19; 8:15; 10:12; 21. Human hands in Scripture may refer to authority given by God, political authority, objects that are produced by humans, creating idol figures, motivation of the ungodly, human arrogance, accountability, and giving praise to God.¹⁶

Other less frequent references and meaning for hand are as follows. The right hand (Hebrew *yamin*, Greek *dexios*) is used particularly as a metaphor for place of honor/authority (Ps. 110:1; Matt. 26:64), to bless (Gen. 48:14), or to seal relationships

¹² Renn, 462.

¹³ Renn, 462.

¹⁴ Renn, 463.

¹⁵ Renn, 463.

¹⁶ Renn, 463.

(Isa. 62:8; Gal. 2:9).¹⁷ Left-handedness is genetically less common, and therefore, is mentioned as an advantage in war (Judg. 3, 20:16).¹⁸ The palm(s) of hand (Hebrew *kaf*) is often simply translated as hand (Lev. 14:15, 26; 2 Kings 9:35; Matt. 26:67; Mark 14:65; John 18:22; Dan. 10:10), and as an anthropomorphic metaphor for a place of remembrance (Isa. 49:16).¹⁹

In the New Testament, hand in Greek is *cheir* and occurs 180 times.²⁰ It also refers to the physical body part as well as in a metaphorical sense. Hand in a literal sense is often found in passages that refer to healing. In a negative sense, it is used in the context of arrest or assault. In a spiritual context, it is found in the reception of the Holy Spirit, a rite of consecration for service, and lifting hands in worship.²¹

Moses Lays Hands on Joshua

The scene for Numbers 27:15–23 is set on the plains of Moab in the Transjordan region where the Israelites are encamped. They are the sons and daughters of the generation who experienced the miraculous exodus from Egypt. During forty years of wandering, the first generation of Israelites over twenty years of age who left Egypt had died because of their rebellion against God (Num. 14:29–30). Even though they are part of the first generation of Israelites who died in the wilderness (Num. 14:38), Joshua and

¹⁷ Katherine Doob Sakenfeld, ed., *The New Interpreter's Dictionary of the Bible*, vol. 2 (Nashville, TN: Abingdon Press, 2006), 731.

¹⁸ Sakenfeld, 731.

¹⁹ Sakenfeld, 731.

²⁰ Renn, 463.

²¹ Renn, 463.

Caleb uniquely have God's permission to enter the Promised Land because they were the only two out of the twelve spies that returned with a good report of Canaan.

In this episode, God sends Moses to Mount Horeb in the Abarim Mountain range for the privilege of seeing the Promised Land before he dies (Num. 27:12). He is not permitted to enter due to his part in the sin of rebellion at Meribah of Kadesh (Num. 27:14). Moses inquires of the Lord as to who shall lead the Israelites. God selects Joshua and gives Moses instructions as to the commissioning of Joshua (Num. 27:15–21). Standing before the high priest Eleazar and the entire congregation, and upon the moral inquiry of the Urim by Eleazar, Moses lays his hands on Joshua and commissions him to become the new leader of the Israelites (Num. 27:22–23).

In setting the background for the story, first of all, the book of Numbers derives from the Greek *Arithmoi* in the Septuagint and *Numeri* from its translation into Latin, but the Hebrew name for the book is *Bedmidbar*, meaning “In the Wilderness.”²² The difference in names points to the purpose of the book and its overall context. The Greek name focuses on the census taking that occurs in the beginning of the Israelite's journey in Sinai (Num. 1:2) and then again on the plains of Moab before they are to enter Canaan (Num. 26:2). *Arithmoi* or *Numeri* offers a rational view that treats the characters as objects rather than the chosen people who have a destiny with God.

The Hebrew title, *Bedmidbar*, seems to focus on the narrative of the Israelites' experience in the wilderness as a people who have, in turn, been faithless and faithful. They have a relationship with the living God that includes judgment and reward, and finally receiving the inheritance of their promise from God, the land of Canaan. The

²² Roy E. Gane, “Numbers,” in *The Baker Illustrated Bible Commentary*, eds. Gary M. Burge and Andrew E. Hill (Grand Rapids, MI: Baker, 2012), 116.

Hebrew title speaks to the condition of Moses and Joshua, exemplifying the theme of death and new hope.²³ Moses is dying in the wilderness and Joshua is coming out of the wilderness to a new hope settlement.

The relationship between the Israelites and their God is in stark contrast to other peoples of the region. Morality of the Israelites was based on hearing from God and being held accountable for personal and community actions. Mesopotamian, Hittite, and Egyptian morality, on the other hand, was based on maintaining social order and tolerating the inconsistency of their gods due to the polytheistic hierarchy that constrained their gods in rewarding righteousness.²⁴ Conversely, the Israelites' monotheism freed them from the fickle nature of the polytheistic structure that required rituals to be performed based on fear.²⁵ Their belief in the one God involved rituals that were a "token of relational transaction," with a God who made covenants.²⁶ Therefore, Moses' dialogue with God was based on covenant relationship and progressed with the certainty that what God says is truth, as well as obedience to divine instruction that produces sure results.

The narrative of Joshua's commissioning is strategically placed directly after the narrative of Zelophehad's daughters' plea for their rightful inheritance as the children of a man without sons. Cole states, "The editorial juxtapositioning of the case of inheritance

²³ Thomas B. Dozeman, "Numbers: Introduction, Commentary, and Reflections" in vol. 2 of *The New Interpreter's Bible: A Commentary in Twelve Volumes*, ed. Leander E. Keck (Nashville, TN: Abingdon Press, 1996), 219.

²⁴ Roy E. Gane, "Leviticus," in *Zondervan Illustrated Bible Backgrounds Commentary*, ed. John H. Walton (Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan, 2009), 288.

²⁵ Gane, "Leviticus," 287.

²⁶ Gane, "Leviticus," 287.

for Zelophehad's daughters with the directive for Moses to view the land from a distance and announce his successor serves several functions."²⁷ It provides an organized sequence from the census determining who is to enter the Promised Land, followed by the two exceptions. The first was the case of the daughters who established their inheritance without benefit of primogeniture, followed by the case of Moses, who was denied part of the new settlement. Within the narrative framework, Moses' imminent death would require explanation of why he is denied entry into Canaan, and then of supreme importance, consideration of a successor.

By the time the Israelites were ready to engage in the conquest of Canaan, they had gone through the process of development from a collection of former slaves having common tribal ancestry into that of a nation having self-determination and a national identity. The theme of theodicy, the justification of divine character and the vindication of God in the face of evil, is evident.²⁸ The story from Exodus to Deuteronomy tells how the Israelites, through divine guidance, had a form of government that included a hierarchy of leadership; social order and moral laws to bind them together; a defined theology and religious rituals; some military experience from skirmishes in the wilderness; and traditions that were exercised through their religious rites. God repeatedly delivered the Israelites from destruction, sustained them in dire circumstances, and justifiably held them accountable for trusting God's directives.

Given Moses' impending death, coupled with the preparation needed for the conquest of Canaan, the need for a God-given succession plan was evident. God and

²⁷ R. Dennis Cole, "Numbers," in *The New American Commentary*, ed. E. Ray Clendenen (Nashville, TN: Broadman & Holman, 2000), 466.

²⁸ Gane, "Numbers," 117.

Moses subsequently began a dialogue on Mount Nebo surrounding leadership succession. Divine guidance led the Israelites through the wilderness for forty years. Therefore, it is reasonable that divine guidance for succession would be forthcoming as well. Roy E. Gane summarizes the theodicy theme in his statement that “one can journey safely with God and be His holy people.”²⁹

Moses begins his dialogue with God over the succession of leadership by acknowledging God’s will in making the decision of succession. He states, “Let the LORD, the God of the spirits of all flesh, appoint someone over the congregation” (Num. 27:16 NRSV).³⁰ Moses not only declares the supremacy of God in the decision, he also declares that God knows the inward being of each individual. Consequently, God is best able to make the decision of who would be the best fit for the position.

The word “spirit” in Numbers 27:15 is the Hebrew word *ruach*, and has several meanings including “the rational soul, the seat of the affections, emotions, and passions of various kinds, mode of feeling and acting, in which sense one is said to have firmness of mind, of firm spirit, of will, counsel, purpose, the spirit of God.”³¹ Given the context, any one of these meanings could apply, but the contextual connection to “spirit of all flesh” refers to the non-tangible attributes of humanity. The omniscient God has thorough knowledge of every human being and the wisdom of God may be relied upon to choose wisely.

²⁹ Gane, “Numbers,” 117.

³⁰ New Revised Standard Version (NRSV) is used throughout this chapter unless otherwise noted.

³¹ William Wilson, *Wilson’s Old Testament Word Studies*, unabridged ed. (McLean, VA: MacDonald, 1990), 411.

What are the qualifications that made Joshua the best fit? No mention of leadership skills or training appears in this passage, yet history of Joshua's leadership shows that during the wilderness experience, qualifications may be inferred. Joshua was successful in leading a skirmish against the Amalekites at Rephidim (Exod. 17:9–16). He was Moses' assistant on Mt. Sinai when Moses received the stone tablets (Exod. 24:13). Joshua stood as sentry at the Tent of Meeting in the wilderness when Moses met with God face to face (Exod. 33:11). Nevertheless, none of these accomplishments are mentioned in Numbers 27.

The only attribute mentioned is that Joshua had the spirit. Roy E. Gane says, "but the spirit is his most essential qualification."³² It is important to note that Joshua had the Spirit before the commissioning service. When Moses gathers seventy elders at the Tent of Meeting recorded in Numbers 11:16-20 and imparts to them some of the Spirit that is in him, Joshua may have been one of the seventy who received an impartation of the same Spirit that was in Moses. This Spirit is not one originating from Moses, but rather some of the same Spirit Moses received from God. Joshua, being such a close assistant of Moses, could easily have been one of the seventy, particularly in light of Numbers 11:18 where it says of Joshua, "a man in whom is the Spirit." Numbers 11:24-30 specifically addresses the nature of the Spirit that is in Joshua where Moses says, "Would that all the LORD's people were prophets and that the LORD would put his Spirit on them!" (Num. 11: 29b). The Spirit is not of man; it is of God as indicated in the context of verses 24 and 25, referencing the seventy elders. These verses indicate that Joshua was likely part of the seventy who received an impartation. Joshua's leadership, therefore, was not based on

³² Gane, "Numbers," 119.

natural qualities or accomplishments even though he would have qualified by human standards. It was divine choice.

The compassion of God for the people is expressed in Numbers 27:17 where God gives two clear reasons for needing a leader. God was concerned that the leader of the Israelites be dedicated to their success, especially in light of the conquest that lay ahead. Leading the congregation to “bring them out, and bring them in,” may be a reference to military leadership similar to 1 Samuel 18:13 where David “marched out and came in.”³³ Having a strong military leader would be vitally important in future campaigns to possess the Promised Land. “Bring them out and bring them in” may also have been a reference to strong leadership called to lead them out of Egypt and into Canaan.³⁴

The second concern in Numbers 27:17 is that the people “may not be like sheep without a shepherd.” The reference of a leader as a shepherd is clearly charismatic and royal, not a priestly leader.³⁵ God is concerned that the people should have leadership that attends to the protection of the people so that they remain a unified people with a clear identity as belonging to God, remain obedient to divine instruction, and remain committed to the covenant relationship forged in the wilderness. Careful shepherding of God’s people was of paramount concern, and the consequences of its deficiency are seen in Israel’s history. The nation of Israel experienced repeated cycles of triumph and failure as leaders shifted from faithfulness to God to idolatry and back again. Jeremiah 23:1–6 is an indictment of leaders who did not keep God’s ways and consequently, the leaders and

³³ Dozeman, 219.

³⁴ Dozeman, 219.

³⁵ Dozeman, 219.

people were exiled. The imagery of a failing shepherd is repeated in Ezekiel 34 and 1 Kings 22:17.³⁶

Once Joshua is identified as Moses' successor, God gives Moses directives that confer the authority of leadership in verses 18–21. First, God tells Moses to “lay your hand upon him” (Num. 27:18b). The laying on of hands as a gesture of transfer and blessing was a familiar practice used in various circumstances in several cultures of the region dating back centuries before Moses. Therefore, it would not have been a totally new idea. For example, a fourteenth century rock-cut tomb in El-Amarna shows a scene where a pharaoh is conferring authority to others by placing his hands over their heads, and another showing the deity Osiris laying hands upon a pharaoh presumably to transfer power.³⁷ Israelite patriarchs also practiced the laying on of hands. It was a practice for blessing children as exemplified by Jacob when he imparted a patriarchal blessing on the sons of Joseph by placing his hands on their heads (Gen. 48:14).

In addition to blessing, the Israelite priests were directed to lay hands on the head of an animal as a ransom for the life of the owner of the animal in sin offerings. Leviticus 1:4 states, “and it shall be acceptable in your behalf as atonement for you.” This ritual is similar to a Hittite ritual identifying the owner of the animal as the one who performs the gesture of making the offering.³⁸ Some have interpreted the gesture as signifying transfer

³⁶ Dozeman, 219.

³⁷ Cole, *Zondervan Illustrated Bible Backgrounds Commentary*, 388.

³⁸ Gane, “Leviticus,” 290.

of guilt upon the animal as a means of removing sin, yet others interpret it as offering one's life to God as a sacrifice.³⁹

Similarly for atonement, the high priest laid hands on the head of a scapegoat to impart the sins of the Israelites upon the animal (Lev. 16:21–22). Roy E. Gane states that the traditional view of atonement in Leviticus 1:4 is the covering of sin derived from the word *kipper*, meaning covering, as the means of ritual purification.⁴⁰ However, it is followed by *min*, meaning *from*, which denotes removal not just covering, and originating from the Akkadian word *kuppuru*, meaning removal.⁴¹ Laying hands on the animal, therefore, would mean transfer of guilt, not just covering it.

In Numbers 8:10, another circumstance called for the laying on of hands. The Sons of Israel, presumably tribal leaders, consecrated the Levites for service by the laying on of hands. Moses commissioned Joshua using the same practice (Num. 27:23). It is a reasonable conclusion, therefore, that the cultural familiarity of this practice was so imbedded in the culture as to making it normative in the rites associated with transfer of power, anointing, or blessing.

The grammatical structure of the verb form offers some further insight. The verb associated with transference is different from that of blessing. In both the cleansing of the Levites in Numbers 8:10 and the commissioning of Joshua, the verb *simakh* is used,

³⁹ Thomas Brisco, "Old Testament Antecedents to Ordination," *Perspectives in Religious Studies* 29, no. 2 (June 1, 2002): 159–75, accessed March 29, 2013, *ATLA Religion Database with ATLASerials*, EBSCOhost, 162.

⁴⁰ Gane, "Leviticus," 290.

⁴¹ Gane, "Leviticus," 290.

having the connotation of transference or substitution.⁴² In contrast, *Sim* is a term used for blessing, and does not have the quality of replacement or transference of authority.⁴³

In Numbers 27:18, God tells Moses to “lay your hand” (singular) on Joshua, but in verse 23 and in Deuteronomy 34:9, it says Moses laid his hands (plural) on Joshua. The discrepancy of singular *yadkah* and plural *yadeikha*, does not appear to be one of disobedience on the part of Moses.⁴⁴ Jacob Milgrom states that “transfer of authority and power can only be performed by the laying of both hands.”⁴⁵ The writer of Numbers simply could have used hand as a synecdoche for hands, making hand and hands interchangeable in this passage. Following the pattern of Joshua’s commissioning, Jewish tradition prescribes the laying on of hands for rabbinic ordination.⁴⁶ It is also common ordination practice among many Christian denominations.

Upon laying hands on Joshua, Moses imparts some of his authority to Joshua. The word *alav*, meaning to invest or place upon him, is used to indicate the transfer of some of Moses’ *hôd* (authority).⁴⁷ The King James Version uses the word honor instead of authority for *hôd*, which could also mean splendor and majesty, attributes of God.⁴⁸ Jacob

⁴² John E. Toews, “Rethinking the Meaning of Ordination: Toward a Biblical Theology of Leadership Affirmation,” *Conrad Grebe Review* 22, no. 1 (December 1, 2004): 5–45, accessed March 17, 2013, *ATLA Religion Database with ATLASerials*, EBSCOhost, 16.

⁴³ Toews, 16.

⁴⁴ Jacob Milgrom, “Numbers,” in *The JPS Torah Commentary*, ed. Nahum M. Sarna (Philadelphia, PA: Jewish Publication Society, 1990), 235.

⁴⁵ Milgrom, 235.

⁴⁶ Milgrom, 235.

⁴⁷ Milgrom, 235–36.

⁴⁸ Aaron Pick, *Dictionary of Old Testament Words for English Readers* (Grand Rapids, MI: Kregel, 1982), 201.

Milgrom points out that an alternative meaning of *hôd*, the majesty, power, and charisma of the Spirit of God, indicates that God transferred to Joshua some of whatever was given to Moses.⁴⁹ Moses was the physical conduit of the transfer of God's empowerment from God to Joshua. However, the *hôd* transferred to Joshua was only a portion of what Moses had, indicating that Moses was unique, and that the leadership of Joshua would not be the same as that of Moses.⁵⁰

The difference in leadership suggested in the passage involves the role of the high priest, Eleazar. In Numbers 27:19 and 21, the phrase "standing before Eleazar," and then having done so in Numbers 27:23, indicates that Joshua would be dependent on the high priest for guidance through the use of the Urim, most likely a divining stone. The priest's input presumably was to determine the will of God in upcoming decision-making, rather than Joshua hearing directly from God.⁵¹ This would suggest a shared leadership, unlike Moses' leadership where he had supremacy over all of the Israelites, including priests.

Itamar Kislev disagrees with the shared leadership of Joshua and Eleazar, the high priest. He suggests that priests added verse nineteen much later, perhaps as late as the Persian period, due to a syntactical issue in verse twenty-one.⁵² In Numbers 27:20b, it says, "so that all the congregation of the Israelites may obey," giving Joshua complete authority, but in verse twenty-one, Joshua is subordinate to Eleazar and the divining of

⁴⁹ Pick, 201.

⁵⁰ Cole, *The New American Commentary*, 468.

⁵¹ Dozeman, 220.

⁵² Itamar Kislev, "The Investiture of Joshua (Numbers 27:12-23) and the Dispute on the Form of Leadership in Yehud," in *Vetus Testamentum* 59, no. 3 (January 1, 2009): 429–55, accessed March 39, 2013, *ATLA Religion Database with ATLASerials*, EBSCOhost, 434-40.

the Urim.⁵³ According to Kislev, priests of later periods sought to increase their leadership role and added verse nineteen to strengthen their position.⁵⁴ Upon removing verse nineteen, the passage reads quite differently. Kislev reconstructed the passage as follows:

And YHWH answered Moses, single out Joshua son of Nun, an inspired man: lay your hands upon him thereby placing some of your radiance upon him, so that the whole Israelite community may obey him. By his instruction they shall go in and out of battle. Moses did as YHWH commanded him.⁵⁵

With this different rendering by Kislev, Joshua's leadership appears more like that of Moses than co-leadership with priests, and Joshua would not have been subservient to the priesthood for direction.

Deuteronomy 34:9 reveals the efficacy of Joshua's commissioning as well as the substance of what was transferred to him when Moses laid hands on him. The act of impartation through the laying on of hands was something more than simply a declaration of Joshua's new position as leader. It was also different from a blessing that an elder would impart over a son or daughter. Deuteronomy 34:9 says that Joshua was "full of the spirit of wisdom, because Moses had laid his hands on him." As a cause-effect statement, it verifies something charismatic as well as something of the essence of God was transferred through Moses into Joshua that equipped him for the new position of leadership. Furthermore, as a result of this empowerment, "the Israelites obeyed him, doing as the LORD had commanded Moses." Fully equipped with authority and spiritual

⁵³ Kislev, 435.

⁵⁴ Kislev, 445.

⁵⁵ Kislev, 438.

impartation, Joshua assumed leadership for the conquest of Canaan and the settlement of the Israelites in their Promised Land.

Jesus Touches the Leper

By the time Jesus arrived on the scene, Israel had centuries of history that included a monarchy, exile, and occupation by other nations, Rome being the latest. The religious landscape also evolved into several streams of thought. Josephus, first century writer of *The Jewish War*, describes them in his comprehensive record of life under Roman rule. He identifies three main groups stating, “Among the Jews there are three schools of thought, whose adherents are called Pharisees, Sadducees, and Essenes respectively.”⁵⁶

The first chapter of Mark, the oldest of the gospels, begins with Jesus’ baptism in the Jordan River, followed by his wilderness experience and calling the twelve closest disciples who eventually became apostles. Mark records Jesus teaching in Capernaum (Mark 1:21–22), an exorcism (Mark 1:23–27), and the healing of Peter’s mother-in-law (Mark 1:30–31), which prompted multitudes to seek Jesus for healings and exorcisms. His popularity expanded very quickly and the demands of ministry and crowds required him to go to secluded places for prayer (Mark 1:35). The chapter concludes with the healing of a leper that involved touch, which is the focus of this exegesis.

As a literary form, Mark’s narrative is a gospel, that is, literally a telling of good news. Adela Collins claims that this narrative is a literary form that originated with

⁵⁶ Flavius Josephus, *The Jewish War*, trans. G.A. Williamson (New York, NY: Penguin Books, 1969), 125.

Christianity.⁵⁷ Collins states that as a literary form, a gospel functions as a recording of oral tradition that emerged out of preaching about the life, death, and resurrection of Jesus.⁵⁸ R. T. France also contends that although Mark intended the gospel to be orally transmitted, it is not a new genre, but rather qualifies as a biography because its nature centers on the subject matter, that is the life, works, and words of Christ.⁵⁹ France describes Mark's gospel as using a "sandwich" device typical of storytelling. This technique includes stopping, turning back to refresh memory, and then continuing with the story, as would be done in oral story telling.⁶⁰ The gospel or good news of the story of Jesus encountering the leper is that Jesus heals.

The narrative of Mark 1:40–45 tells of a leper who comes to Jesus asking for cleansing. Jesus touches him, he speaks healing over him, and the leprosy leaves the man. Jesus then sternly instructs him to fulfill the requirement of the Law regarding cleansing. The former leper spreads the news of his healing and Jesus becomes enormously popular, making it difficult for Jesus to even enter the city due to the crowds seeking him. This story raises several issues, among them the motives of both the leper and Jesus; the laws concerning being ritually unclean; the method of the healing; and the controversies over Jesus' directives to the leper after the healing.

Of the diseases mentioned in Mark's gospel, the first one specifically identified is that of leprosy. Even though leprosy is one of the oldest recorded diseases, in Mark 1:40

⁵⁷ Adela Yarbro Collins, *Mark: A Commentary*, ed. Harold W. Attridge (Minneapolis, MN: Augsburg Fortress, 2007), 19.

⁵⁸ Collins, 19.

⁵⁹ R. T. France, *The Gospel of Mark: A Commentary on the Greek Text* (Grand Rapids: William B. Eerdmans, 2002), 11.

⁶⁰ France, 18–19.

it may not have been Hansen's disease.⁶¹ It could be any scaly skin disorder that had been identified according to Leviticus 13. The importance of leprosy in the context of the story is that the condition required the leper to be disassociated from his community. Once healed, it would require the person to submit to a complicated examination by priests and have them declare the person clean. Furthermore, in the Mishnah (a redaction of oral tradition considered as a second Torah), leprosy is regarded as a sign of someone who has sinned and was deserving of God's punishment.⁶² In addition to the examination by the priests, the former leper would be required to provide an animal sacrifice offering for sin.

This narrative begins by saying the leper came to Jesus, which implies that the leper had some prior knowledge of Jesus as a healer. Jesus already had a reputation for healing and deliverance (vv. 30-31, 35) and so it would not be hard to imagine a leper seeking out someone who had the power to heal him. Furthermore, Jewish culture encouraged people to expect answer to prayers for healing based on Scripture such as 2 Chronicles 26:28–29 and Psalm 107:17-21.⁶³

Mark's narrative tells about the leper's approach to Jesus in that he came "begging him and kneeling" (Mark 1:40). The kneeling before Jesus is also mentioned in the Matthew 8:2 account of the same story. Luke 5:12–16 adds that the leper "bowed with his face to the ground." In all three accounts, the leper appears desperate and is earnestly seeking something Jesus could give him. Faith that Jesus could heal him is not

⁶¹ David E. Garland, "Mark," in *Zondervan Illustrated Bible Backgrounds Commentary: Volume 1, Matthew, Mark, Luke*, ed. Clinton E. Arnold (Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan, 2002), 216–17.

⁶² Garland, 216–17.

⁶³ Fred H. Wight, *Manners and Customs of Bible Lands* (Chicago, IL: Moody Press, 1953), 139.

specifically mentioned, but is easily inferred by the desperate acts of begging and kneeling, and his words, “If you choose, you can make me clean” (Mark 1:40).

The leper’s phrase “If you choose,” is found in all three synoptic gospels. The phrase is one of yielding the decision of action to Jesus, the healer. The word *thelo* translated as *choose* in the phrase is often translated *will*, meaning desire or design, to be inclined.⁶⁴ The significance of the phrase “make me clean” instead of “heal me” may imply atonement for sin as well as healing. Other than Luke 17:15, the verb *iaomai* (heal) is always used for curing sicknesses except in the case of leprosy, where the verb *katharizo* (cleanse) is used.⁶⁵ The word *katharizo* is also used in a moral sense to cleanse from the guilt of sin as in James 4:8.⁶⁶

The connection between the expression of cleansing leprosy and the belief that it is punishment caused by sin may be the source of the phrasing. Cleansing the leper would not only rid him of the skin disorder, it would also grant him reentry into the community as ritually clean and free from the shame of sin. As George B. Teleford, Jr. states, “The leper was *the* untouchable, and under the judgment and punishment of God. Only if made well and only if a priest proclaimed it and if a guilt offering were made as a rite of cleansing could the leper be reintroduced into the community.”⁶⁷

The motive for Jesus’ response to the leper’s plea is only stated in the Mark narrative where it states, “Moved with pity” (Mark 1:41). Although it could be inferred

⁶⁴ W. E. Vine, *An Expository Dictionary of New Testament Words with Their Precise Meanings for English Readers* (Old Tappan, NJ: Flemming H. Revell, 1966), 217.

⁶⁵ Vine, 330.

⁶⁶ Vine, 195.

⁶⁷ George B. Teleford, Jr., “Mark 1:40-45,” *Interpretation* 36, no. 1 (January 1, 1982): 54–58, accessed March 31, 2013, *ATLA Religion Database with ATLASerials*, EBSCOhost, 56.

that Jesus healed the leper out of compassion in the Matthew and Luke narratives, the story moves into the action of Jesus without any mention of motive. Some controversy does exist over the word pity. Kirsopp Lake explains that in the Codex Bezae, a very early text, the word angered, or more precisely “being in passion” (*orgistheis*), is used instead of pity (*splangchnistheis*).⁶⁸ The reason for anger is not given and therefore, is subject to conjecture.

Would Jesus be angry over the injustice of ostracism for sick people? Would he have been angry that evil causes conditions like that of the leper? Teleford, who seems to lean towards the anger translation, postulates that Jesus was expressing deep emotion over the conflict between compassion for the man and the repercussions of touching him. “The story proclaims Jesus as one who can and does reach out and touch and incorporate the last outpost of the profane.”⁶⁹

Taking a different point of view, Lake suggests that the name “Jesus” in verse 41 is an emendation of a later date. Replacing the pronoun *he* with Jesus changes the meaning to that of Jesus “being in a passion.” Lake claims that the pronoun *he* is actually referring to the leper, not to Jesus, which would mean that the emotion of passion expressed in verse 41 is that of the leper. This also changes who stretched out his hand to touch whom. If the leper is the one moved with passion, presumably over his situation, the rest of the statement would mean that he reached out to touch Jesus, not the reverse as is stated in most translations.

⁶⁸ Kirsopp Lake, “Embrimesamenos and Orgistheis, Mark 1,40–43,” *Harvard Theological Review* 16, no. 2 (April 1, 1923): 197–98, accessed March 17, 2013, *ATLA Religion Database with ATLASerials*, EBSCOhost, 197.

⁶⁹ Teleford, 56.

Given the laws regarding the behavior of lepers, this would be a most unusual and highly unlikely move on the part of the leper. Laws regarding the contact lepers would have in the community were restrictive. A leper was required to “go out with rent clothes, bared head, a covering upon his upper lip; and as he went he was required to give warning of his polluted presence with the cry: ‘unclean, unclean.’”⁷⁰ Nothing of these behaviors is recorded in any of the gospels and it would have been highly presumptuous of a leper to purposely touch someone while knowing the strict code of law. Furthermore, the fact that Jesus gives him instructions to follow the law after he is healed reveals that Jesus was aware of the Levitical law regarding cleansing. Therefore, it is unlikely that Jesus would have permitted the leper to break the law in touching him before the healing.

Jack Dean Kingsbury points out that the leper’s declaration that Jesus can make him clean is “saying that Jesus, the Son of God, has the exact same sovereign authority that belongs to God.”⁷¹ Kingsbury further argues that since priests are the only ones who had the power to declare someone clean, Jesus’ actions have messianic meaning. He states, “Because Jesus commands compliance with the Mosaic law, he stands out in this story as one whose coming means, not the abolition, but the fulfillment of the law.”⁷²

Assuming that Jesus originated the corresponding touching action to the plea of the leper and the emotion it engendered, Jesus “stretched out his hand and touched him” (Mark 1:41) with full knowledge that this action would bring about conflict. Jesus’ touch is a remarkable action in light of the strict Jewish code in Leviticus 15, which would have

⁷⁰ Teleford, 56.

⁷¹ Jack Dean Kingsbury, “Miracle of the Cleansing of the Leper as an Approach to the Theology of Matthew,” *Currents in Theology and Mission* 4, no. 6 (December 1, 1977): 343–49, accessed March 31, 2013, *ATLA Religion Database with ATLASerials*, EBSCOhost, 346.

⁷² Kingsbury, 347.

imputed uncleanness to Jesus for having touched a leper. The ramifications of such action would present major conflict with both Pharisee and Sadducee orthodox leaders.

Nevertheless, physical contact was made.

Upon touching, Jesus affirms his desire to heal the leper and speaks the prayer of declaration over him to be clean. He says, “I do choose. Be made clean!” (Mark 1:41). It is a pronouncement of healing and resulted in both dramatic and immediate healing. The statement implies that Jesus had both the will and the power to heal, confirming the overall message of Mark’s gospel of the divine nature of Jesus, Son of God. Mark 1:44 makes it very clear that the statement, “Be made clean,” is not a priestly declaration of cleansing. It is a statement of his physical and relational condition. Jesus gives the man stern instructions to follow Mosaic law regarding priestly declaration of cleansing after the healing. The healing does make him physically clean as Jesus said, but it does not automatically reconnect him to the community, nor does it relieve him of the requirement of sacrifice.

The moment of healing is not clearly delineated among the details of Jesus touching the leper, the declaration of his will, or the proclamation of his cleanness. Consequently, it cannot be ascribed to any one of these three details separate from the other two. Nevertheless, touch was involved and was efficacious in the combination of what occurred. Healing was transmitted to the man in a radical instantaneous manner to the degree that it was irrefutably miraculous.

Subsequent to the healing, shift from compassion to anger occurs where Jesus is seen “sternly warning him he sent him away at once” (Mark 1:43). The word *embrimaomai* is translated sternly and carries the meaning of intensive strength of

emotion in the manner of the snorting of an angry horse.⁷³ Jesus continues his command and gives the healed man a three part command to keep silent, show himself to the priest, and provide the Mosaic offering.

It has been suggested by R. T. France that Jesus expresses this hostility because he has foreknowledge of the man's disobedience in keeping silent, combined with Jesus' attitude toward ritual law.⁷⁴ This does not seem reasonable. As a Jew under the Levitical law, Jesus would have been complicit in the man's disobedience of the revered Mosaic regulations. Yet Jesus departed from the law by touching the leper, and in doing so, Jesus demonstrated his power and authority to heal. As Collins states, he is "God's agent."⁷⁵ Collins also suggests that the directive to keep silent "contributes to the theme of the mysterious and secret identity of Jesus."⁷⁶

The last part of the command provides the motive of Jesus' command. Jesus says, "as a testimony to them" (Mark 1:44). Within the context, "them" refers to the priests to whom the healed man should have gone. However, there may be a broader collection of persons. In the same sentence Jesus tells the man to show himself to the priest (singular) and then later says "as a testimony to them" (plural). This discrepancy is found in all three synoptic gospels and provokes a question about to whom the testimony applies. Apparently, Jesus had more individuals in mind than one priest once the priestly proclamation of the man's cleansing is given. The Scripture is silent as to whether "them" is the community of religious leaders or the local community, but considering the conflict

⁷³ Vine, 182.

⁷⁴ France, 117.

⁷⁵ Collins, 179.

⁷⁶ Collins, 179.

with religious leaders Jesus had soon after in Capernaum (Mark 2:6), the case for religious leaders is stronger.

Mark 1:45 reveals the man's disobedience of Jesus' commands and its consequences. Instead of keeping silent about the healing and showing himself to the priest, he spread the news of his healing. The news spread rather quickly and the crowds following Jesus became so great that he could no longer move about freely and had to go to deserted places to pray alone. Mark's narrative does not explain what the crowds wanted and the gospel of Matthew does not mention this detail at all. Luke 5:15–16 says that the crowds sought Jesus for his preaching as well as healing.

Mark presents a negative attitude towards the expansion of Jesus' popularity in verse 45. It emphasizes the restrictions on mobility imposed by notoriety in the phrase, "could no longer go into town openly." This coincides with the Markan theme of Jesus, the suffering Son. As Pheme Perkins states, the overall theme of Mark portrays Jesus as "the Son of Man, came to suffer and die, not to win the adulation of the crowds through working miracles."⁷⁷

Conclusions

As human beings, touch is an integral part of familial bonding and social connections that extend to human contact beyond the family and to the divine. In the human experience with the divine, the practice of touch specifically for impartation has an exceptionally long history evidenced in religious rituals and practices that even

⁷⁷ Pheme Perkins, "The Gospel of Mark, Introduction, Commentary, and Reflections" in vol. 8 of *The New Interpreter's Bible: A Commentary in Twelve Volumes*, ed. Leander E. Keck (Nashville, TN: Abingdon Press, 1995), 543.

predates the Israelites. In Numbers 27, God specifically instructs Moses to lay hands on Joshua, while Jesus stretches forth his hand and touches the leper in Mark 1. The act of the laying on of hands had a significant role in the impartation of charismatic outcome in both passages. Joshua received a transfer of authority and Spirit from Moses, while the leper received healing virtue from Jesus.

The significance of touch in modern rituals, such as ordination and prayer for the sick, definitely has a biblical foundation, but not necessarily an imperative. Whereas the New Testament gives guidelines for leadership qualities and a pattern of prayer with laying on of hands, it does not provide any protocol or requirement for ordination, and it can be argued that ordination is not even a prerequisite for church leadership. The New Testament also does not require the laying on of hands to pray for the sick as evidenced by examples in Scripture where healing occurred without the mention of laying on of hands (Matt. 15:28, John 5:8–9, Acts 9:34). It is apparent that the laying on of hands is a practice of choice or one that is prompted by God in individual situations. In either case, one can expect efficacy based on biblical precedence.

Besides the two pericopes discussed in this chapter, several biblical references support the current practice of laying on of hands for impartation of approval for ministry (Acts 6:6; Acts 13:3); healing (Luke 13:13; Acts 9:17); blessing (Mark 10:16); and receiving charismatic gifts (Acts 5:12; Acts 8:17–19; 1 Tim. 4:14). In each of these cases, the laying on of hands was significant and efficacious for its intended outcome. Therefore, even though the ritual of laying on of hands does not have the same imperative as the sacraments (sometimes referred to as ordinances) of water baptism and the Eucharist (also known as Holy Communion or the Lord's Supper), imposition of hands in

the contemporary church has absolute legitimacy as a practice in rites and general ministry with the expectation of charismatic outcomes based on sound biblical precedence.

CHAPTER THREE

HISTORICAL FOUNDATIONS

Introduction

“Reach out and touch someone.”⁷⁸ AT&T’s 1979 slogan for telephones, one of the top advertising slogans of all time still being quoted, is powerful and brilliant for its simplicity and profundity. It seems to strike at the very core of what it means to be human. An infant is born and is tenderly held. A child cries and is consoled by stroking and hugging. Business partners agree and shake hands. Lovers hold hands to express their commitment to each other. The list of times and places people purposefully touch is very long and connected to virtually every important event of life.

Touch is not only important among people; it is associated with humanity’s connection with the divine. The power of touch as a transfer agent for impartation of public affirmation, sacramental blessing, public declaration, reception of the Holy Spirit and *charismata*, and healing are some of the major concepts that frame the understanding of this gesture. Over the past two millennia, some uses of touch in the context of ritual have remained intact and others have seen some modification in form and practice, particularly in the Pentecostal and Charismatic revivals of the twentieth century.

⁷⁸ N. W. Ayer, “Advertising Slogan Hall of Fame: AT&T, 1979,” *Ad Slogans*, accessed October 9, 2013, <http://www.adslogans.co.uk/hof/>.

Imposition of Hands in Ancient Cultures

Imposing hands in worship and rituals appears to be deeply imbedded in the makeup of humanity, and has been associated with religious practices among various peoples for millennia. Hands have been used and interpreted as symbols of power, mystical transfer of spiritual substance, and impartation of authority from the very earliest times. For example, Tablet XI of the ancient Mesopotamian Gilgamesh epic poem, one of the earliest literary texts known to humanity, tells a flood story similar to the Noah story of Scripture, and includes the following scene of the god Enil imparting immortality to Utnapishtim and his wife by declaration and laying on of hands.

Holding me by the hand, he took me aboard. He took my wife aboard and made (her) kneel by my side. Standing between us, he touched our foreheads to bless us: “Hitherto Utnapishtim has been but human. Henceforth Utnapishtim and his wife shall be like unto us gods.”⁷⁹

Archaeological evidence points to the importance of hands in religious contexts. Images on ancient Assyrian cylinder seals show worshippers with hands raised; huge Assyrian relief panels show winged creatures (genies) with one uplifted arm; and stylized gestures pictured on ancient Egyptian wall paintings show individuals with raised hands worshipping gods.⁸⁰ H. L. Ginsberg describes a bas-relief of Hadad (Baal), a weather god

⁷⁹ E. A. Speiser, trans. “The Flood Narrative from the Gilgamesh Epic,” in *Ancient Near Eastern Texts* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1950), 60–72, as reprinted in Isaac Mendelsohn, ed., *Religions of the Ancient Near East* (New York, NY: Library of Religion Paperbook Series, 1955): 100–06, notes by Mendelsohn, accessed April 11, 2013, *Pseudoepigrapha, Apocropha, and Sacred Writings*, <http://www.pseudepigrapha.com/pseudepigrapha/gilgamesh.html>.

⁸⁰ Collections of Ancient Near East and Ancient Egypt at the Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York, NY, include the following examples of images showing worshippers with raised hands: Stamp Seal Worshipper Kneeling before Mushhushshu-dragon and Standard, (6th–5th century) B.C., 86.11.35; Assyrian Chalcedony Cylinder Seal: Ishtar Worshipped and Flanked by Winged Genies, 1989.361.1; Neo-Assyrian Relief Panels Showing Winged Creatures [Genies] (883–859) 22.143.4; Stella of Slamun and Taruy Worshipping Anubis, (1550–1295 B.C.), 90.6.128; Darius I Offering to Amun, Temple of Amun at Hibis, (521–486 B.C.), 48.105.6; Panel of Djeddbastet (825–713 B.C.) 22.3.34; Stela of Nayefennbu (825–712

of ancient Canaanite origin showing a small figure of a king with hands raised in prayer and worship.⁸¹ Whereas these images do not depict individuals touching each other, Henry Preserved Smith states in his article, “The Laying on of Hands,” that hands raised in worship convey the “hopes to receive the divine grace and hands are the means of communication, [to] bring him into touch with the divinity.”⁸²

Besides the artifacts of ancient cultures that clearly show the role of hands in worship, the transfer of spiritual substance is also an ancient concept, and it was often connected to rituals that include imposition of hands. The Polynesian and Melanesian concept of *mana*, similar to the Native North American concept of *orenda* and *wakanda* and the ancient Roman idea of *numen*, is described by Herbert Jennings Rose as one that “signifies a superhuman force, impersonal in itself but regularly belonging to a person (a god of some kind) or occasionally to an exceptionally important body of human beings as the Roman senate or people.”⁸³ Rose further claims that *mana* is the oldest religious idea and that it is “so ancient that with our present knowledge and any that we are likely to get in the future we can find nothing older.”⁸⁴ In referring to *mana*, Dale R. Bengsten states,

B.C.) 22.3.32; Votive Stela of Userhat (1353–1323 B.C.), 05.4.2; Purifying and Mourning the Dead, Tomb of Nebamun and Ipuky [facsimile showing priests with hands extended blessing mummy] (1390–1349 B.C.), 30.3.108; Relief of Ramses I (1295–1294 B.C.), 11.155.3c; Sumerian Cylinder Seal with Ritual Scene (2112–2400 B.C.) 1999.325.10; Djehutyemhab and His Wife Worshipping Anum Re Harakhty, Tomb of Djehutyemhab (1279–1213 B.C.), 15.5.12.

⁸¹ Harold Louis Ginsberg, “Ugaritic Studies and the Bible,” *Biblical Archaeologist* 8, no. 2 (May 1, 1945): 41–58, accessed October 3, 2013, *ATLA Religion Database with ATLASerials*, EBSCOhost, 53.

⁸² Henry Preserved Smith, “The Laying-on of Hands,” *The American Journal of Theology*, 17, no. 1, (January, 1913): 47–62, accessed on October 4, 2013, www.JSTOR.org/199.79.168.81, 48.

⁸³ Herbert Jennings Rose, “Numen and Mana,” *Harvard Theological Review* 44, no. 3 (July 1, 1951): 109–20, accessed October 3, 2013, *ATLA Religion Database with ATLASerials*, EBSCOhost, 109.

⁸⁴ Herbert Jennings Rose, “Mana in Greece and Rome,” *Harvard Theological Review* 42, no. 3 (July 1, 1949): 155–74, accessed October 3, 2013, *ATLA Religion Database with ATLASerials*, EBSCOhost, 174.

“There is a connection between the sacred and the traditional which leads to ritual conservatism and ancestor worship.”⁸⁵

In ancient world belief, *mana* can be transmitted from person to person, from an object of veneration to persons, or from the gods to a person by touch or by proximity to that which contains it.⁸⁶ For example, John Fleter Tipei quotes Plato’s *Theages*, in which Plato describes Socrates’ *mana* of knowledge transmitted to his disciples by being in proximity to him. “Now I have told you all this because this spiritual power that attends me also exerts itself to the full in my intercourse with those who spend their time with me.”⁸⁷ Socrates further states, “And it seemed to me to be much more when I was in the same room and looked at you as you were speaking than when I turned my eyes elsewhere: but my progress was far the greatest and most marked whenever I sat beside you and held and touched you.”⁸⁸ Clearly Socrates is noting the impartation of that which resides in him to his students without direct instruction indicating his belief in the concept of *mana*.

Ancient Romans also exhibited belief in transferable intangible substance. Rose discusses the Roman concept of *numen* as a manifestation of power similar to *mana*. He emphasizes the idea of transfer of the power in the Roman phrase, “*militibus imerat ut*

⁸⁵ Dale R. Bengston, “R. R. Marrett and the Study of Religion,” *Journal of the American Academy of Religion* 47, no. 4 (December 1, 1979): 645–59, accessed October 3, 2013, *ATLA Religion Database with ATLASerials*, EBSCOhost, 651.

⁸⁶ John Fleter Tipei, *The Laying on of Hands in the New Testament: Its Significance, Techniques, and Effects* (Lanham, MD: University Press of America, 2009), 90.

⁸⁷ Tipei, 90.

⁸⁸ Tipei, 91.

hostem aggrediantur,”⁸⁹ which essentially means, to impart the leader’s *numen* to his soldiers for success in attacking the enemy. The presumption is that the *numen* would bring about success and that it is transferable from the leader to the soldiers.

By 14–12 BC, worship of the Roman emperor’s *genius* (the property or virtue of what makes a god that can be present in animate beings or inanimate objects) became an official Roman cultic practice throughout Italy.⁹⁰ The Roman concept of *genius*, not to be confused with contemporary meanings of intelligence, is synonymous with *numen* based on several stone engravings in which *genius Augusti* and *numen Augusti* are used interchangeably.⁹¹ Besides worshipping gods or venerating emperors, ancient Romans used the authority of touch to indicate the transfer of social status. Smith describes the Roman ritual of slave manumission in which the slave owner pronounces the liberating formula while holding the slave’s head or another body part, indicating the authority of the slaveholder to liberate a slave.⁹² The declaration over the slave was essential in communicating the purpose, but the imposition of hands also communicated the idea of transfer.

⁸⁹ Rose, “Mana in Greece and Rome,” 164. The phrase *militibus imerat ut hostem aggrediantur* literally means, “It goes to the soldiers that they may attack (be aggressive) to the enemy.”

⁹⁰ Duncan Fishwick, “Genius and Numen,” *Harvard Theological Review* 62, no. 3 (July 1, 1969): 356–67, accessed October 3, 2013, *ATLA Religion Database with ATLASerials*, EBSCOhost, 357.

⁹¹ Fishwick, 357.

⁹² Smith, “The Laying on of Hands,” 53.

Scriptural References to the Laying on of Hands

In view of the long history of imposition of hands in various contexts and cultures of the Mediterranean region, it is not surprising that Israelite rituals in Old Testament Scriptures that incorporate laying on of hands appear to be understood as normative and are mentioned in the context of impartation without much detail or explanation of the practice. In the Old Testament, the laying on of hands is used in various contexts as listed in the table as follows.

Table 3.1. Old Testament References to Human Imposition of Hands

Scripture Reference	Context
Gen. 48:14	Patriarchal blessing: Israel (Jacob) blesses Manasseh and Ephraim, the children of Joseph
Lev. 3:2, 8, 13	Sacrificial peace offering
Lev. 4:4, 15, 24, 29, 33; Lev. 8:14	Sacrificial sin offering
Exod. 29:10; Num. 8:12; 2 Chron. 29:13	Sacrificial burnt offering
Lev. 1:4; Lev. 8:18, 22; Exod. 29:15; Num. 8:12	
Lev. 8:22; Exod. 29:19	Ram of ordination (consecration of priests)
Lev. 16:21	Yom Kippur (Day of Atonement)
Num. 8:10	Consecration of Levites
Num. 27:18; Deut. 34:9	Commissioning of Joshua
Lev. 24:14	Passing of a sentence on accused
2 Kings 5:11	Naaman expecting a healing
Sus. v. 34 (Apocrypha)	Susanna accused of adultery

The patriarchal blessing of Israel (Jacob) with the ritual of the laying on of hands is accompanied by declarations and prophecy for the future of the sons of Joseph. The importance of which hand had been placed on the elder son was such that when Israel placed his right hand on the younger son, Joseph raised the issue with his father.

Patriarchal blessing is also described in Genesis 26:18–30 in the scenario in which Isaac

blesses his sons Jacob and Esau. Imposition of hands is not specifically mentioned in the actual blessing. However, Isaac wrongly identifies Jacob as Esau by touch during the event.

In Old Testament rites, sacrificial offerings with the imposition of hands accomplish the transfer of ownership of guilt to the animal. During the Yom Kippur sacrifice, the nation is freed from the ramifications of sin by the covering of blood, transferring the guilt to the sacrificed animal. The same idea of transferring guilt is applied to the individual accused of wrongdoings such as in the case of blasphemers (Lev. 24:14). An example in the Apocrypha is that of Susanna in verse 34, in which she was wrongly accused of adultery. Hands are laid upon her head to declare her guilt.

Transfer of authority for particular service is exemplified with the consecration of the Levites. Leaders of the Israelite nation imposed hands on the Levites during the ceremony of their cleansing, which communicated the authority of Levites to their service as well as agreement by the community to receive their service. Levites, in turn, were assigned the responsibility of imposing hands on animals for ritual cleansing.

A somewhat distinctive case of transference is the commissioning of Joshua. Deuteronomy 34:9 indicates that some of the same *hôd* (authority and *charismata*) that Moses carried was imparted to Joshua upon the laying on of hands. This transference is more than simply announcing and affirming a new leadership and the laying on hands to symbolize new authority. It is a spiritual impartation to Joshua to equip him with some of same *hôd* for leadership that was in Moses.

Continuity of the practice of laying on of hands from Old to New Testament exists for consecration of bishops, deacons, and presbyters, but differs in the initiation of

catechumens, impartation of healing, and impartation of the Holy Spirit and *charismata* (spiritual gifts). Table 3.2 indicates the New Testament references and their contexts.

Table 3.2. New Testament References to Human Imposition of Hands

Scripture Reference	Context
Mark 1:20–31; Matt. 8:14–15; Luke 4:38, 39	Jesus heals Peter’s mother-in-law
Mark 1:32–34; Matt. 8:16; Luke 4:40–41	Jesus heals in Capernaum
Mark 3:9–11; Luke 6:19	Jesus heals at the Sermon on the Mount
Mark 5:25–34; Matt. 9:20–22; Luke 8:44–48	Jesus heals woman with issue of blood
Mark 5:22–43; Matt. 9:18–26; Luke 8:41–56	Jesus raises Jairus’ daughter from the dead
Mark 6:1–6; Matt. 13:53–58; Luke 4:16–30	Jesus heals a few in Nazareth
Mark 6:56; Matt. 14:35–36	Jesus healing at Gennesaret
Mark 7:31–37	Jesus heals the man deaf
Mark 8:22–26	Jesus heals blind man in Bethesda
Mark 10:13–16; Matt. 19:13–15; Luke 18:15–17	Jesus blessing the children
Luke 13:10–17	Jesus heals woman; illness caused by a spirit
Luke 4:40	Jesus heals all before going to the “lonely place”
Luke 24:50–53	Jesus blesses the disciples
Acts 6:1–6	Appointment of deacons
Acts 8:4–25	Samaritans receive the Holy Spirit
Acts 9:11–17	Paul is healed and is filled with the Holy Spirit
Acts 13:1–3	Commissioning of Saul and Barnabas
Acts 14:23	Appointment of elders
Acts 19:1–6	Ephesians receive the Holy Spirit
1 Tim. 4:14; 2 Tim. 1:6	Ordination of Timothy
1 Tim. 5:22	Ordination or reconciliation of sinners (differing interpretations)
Heb. 6:2	An elementary teaching (doctrine)

With the exception of blessing the children (Mark 10:13–16; Matt. 19:13–15; Luke 18:15–17) and blessing the disciples (Luke 24:50–53), Jesus exercises the practice of the laying on of hands in the context of healing. Other uses for the imposition of hands for

commissioning, ordaining, reconciliation of sinners, receiving the Holy Spirit, receiving *charismata*, and stating its status as an elementary doctrine are found in the epistles.

In defining *charisma*, Arthur Piepkorn points out that it may be used to describe personal magnetism or exceptional leadership qualities within general contexts. However, in religious circles *charismata* may be applied to supernatural graces (gifts) that are needed to perform service on behalf of the church, and more recently, the supernatural operation of the Spirit of God in a believer.⁹³ This definition of *charismata* in religious context conforms to what is found in New Testament Scripture, the writings of the apostolic fathers, its use during the patristic period, and its use in the Pentecostal Movement, particularly as imparted with the laying on of hands.⁹⁴

Piepkorn also examines whether *charismata* and *pneumatika* (things spiritual) are for all believers or the prophetic office and function. He also investigates *charismata* as it relates to the presbyteral office. He draws four conclusions. First of all, the implications for the church of what the New Testament states about *charismata* may be more appropriately seen as *pneumatika*. As used in the New Testament, *charismata* simply means “a gratuitous gift.”⁹⁵ Secondly, the early church did recognize the importance of responsible leadership in both spiritual and administrative matters.⁹⁶ Thirdly, an opposing tension between structure and spirit has always existed in the church. “The effort to

⁹³ Arthur Carl Piepkorn, “Charisma in the New Testament and the Apostolic Fathers,” *Concordia Theological Monthly* 42, no. 6 (June 1, 1971): 369–89, accessed August 30, 2013, *ATLA Religion Database with ATLASerials*, EBSCOhost, 379.

⁹⁴ Piepkorn, 379.

⁹⁵ Piepkorn, 386–89.

⁹⁶ Piepkorn, 387.

catalog criteria, to create canons, and to apply discipline . . . has always produced tensions, of which we have an early example in the paradigmatic case of John of Ephesus and Diotrephes in 3 John.”⁹⁷ Finally, all spiritual gifts originate from the same Holy Spirit, and therefore, “it would seem to be the task of the church’s administrative leadership at every echelon to take to heart the apostolic injunction not to quench the Spirit.”⁹⁸

Sacramental and Liturgical Contexts

In light of application within the structure of the church from early times, James Dallen’s journal article in *Worship* discusses the evolution of Catholic doctrine of the imposition of hands as a sacramental rite and its theological meaning as it is used in liturgy and penance beginning with the third century to the modern period.⁹⁹ He focuses on penance rather than the impartation of charismatic gifts. Dallen asserts that the defining attributes of penance have evolved along with the rite. The imposition of hands in the context of penances seems closely associated with forgiveness and removal of guilt, which conforms to Old Testament concepts.

Dallen emphasizes the Scripture verse, “Do not lay hands upon anyone too hastily and thus share responsibility for the sins of others; keep yourself free from sin” (1 Tim.

⁹⁷ Piepkorn, 387.

⁹⁸ Piepkorn, 387.

⁹⁹ James Dallen, "Imposition of Hands in Penance: A Study in Liturgical History," *Worship* 51, no. 3 (May 1, 1977): 224–47, accessed August 30, 2013, *ATLA Religion Database with ATLASerials*, EBSCOhost, 223–47.

5:22 NASB)¹⁰⁰ was taken to mean a rite of reconciliation as far back as the third century. Dallen claims that the use of the laying on of hands to reconcile sinners is well attested, but little evidence, if any, exists that it was used sacramentally or liturgically prior to the third century. In contrast to Dallen, Brian Irwin interprets 1 Timothy 5:22 as a warning to refrain from hastily accusing church leaders of evil, not the reconciliation of sinners. Because reconciling apostates does not appear until the third century during the early church persecutions, the Scripture could not be referring to reconciliation.¹⁰¹ Irwin further states that the laying on of hands for ordination is also not clearly recorded until the third century.¹⁰²

The first documented reference to laying on of hands for forgiveness is by Hippolytus, written some time before 222 AD in the text *Philosophoumena (Contra haereses)*.¹⁰³ Dallen, claiming that imposition of hands became a church rite in patristic times states, “Yet when penance was formally institutionalized and canonically regulated in the mid-third century, the rite of imposing hands was sufficiently traditional to be taken for granted.”¹⁰⁴ According to Dallen, Origen applies the ritual of laying on of hands for forgiveness based on James 5:14 as stated in Origen’s *Homily on Leviticus 2:4*.¹⁰⁵ “A fifth forgiveness of sins is when ‘someone will convert a sinner from the error of his

¹⁰⁰ New American Standard Bible (NASB) is used throughout this chapter unless otherwise noted.

¹⁰¹ Brian P. Irwin, “The Laying on of Hands in 1 Timothy 5:22: a New Proposal,” *Bulletin For Biblical Research* 18, no. 1 (January 1, 2008): 123–29, accessed March 5, 2013, *ATLA Religion Database with ATLASerials*. EBSCOhost, 122–24.

¹⁰² Irwin, 122–24.

¹⁰³ Dallen, 225.

¹⁰⁴ Dallen, 226.

¹⁰⁵ Dallen, 225–26.

way.’ For thus divine Scripture says, ‘Whoever will make a sinner turn from the error of his way will save a soul from death and cover a multitude of sins.’”¹⁰⁶ However, contrary to Dallen’s claim, Origen merely quotes the Scripture in reference to his list of seven ways in which sin is remitted for Christians. Origen did not specifically state that the laying on of hands had become a rite (ceremony) of remission, nor did he even imply that penance had become a sacrament.

Dallen also claims that Cyprian’s writing in 250 AD indicates that imposition of hands is a rite reserved for bishops and is associated with penance and “granting the *ius communicationis*” (right to share in the community’s spiritual life, particularly the Eucharist) to penitents.¹⁰⁷ Cyprian states, “Those who are baptized in the church are brought to the prelates of the church. And by our prayers and by the imposition of hands, they obtain the Holy Spirit and are perfected with the Lord’s seal.”¹⁰⁸ The formalization that Dallen claims is a three stage process: “*exomologesis* (acknowledgement), *paenitentia* (doing of penance) and *reconciliatio* (reconciliation),” and the imposition of hands occurs at the first and third stage.¹⁰⁹

Dallen also states that Cyprian’s text *De rebaptismate*, written between 256 and 258 AD, speaks of the ritual of imposition of hands for both penance and confirmation. However, this does not verify its status as sacramental and raises doubt about Dallen’s

¹⁰⁶ Origen, “Homily 2 on Leviticus,” *Origen, Homilies on Leviticus: 1–16*, G.W. Barkley, trans. (Washington, DC: Catholic University of America Press, 1990): 39-51, accessed October 11, 2013, http://ldysinger.stjohnsem.edu/@texts/0250_origen/04_hom2_on_lev.htm.

¹⁰⁷ Dallen, 226.

¹⁰⁸ David W. Bercot, ed., *A Dictionary of Early Christian Beliefs* (Peabody, MA: Hendrickson, 1998), 327.

¹⁰⁹ Dallen, 227.

claim about the laying on of hands being a sacramental rite as early as the third century.¹¹⁰ It is not until the mid-to-late fourth century in which imposition of hands seems to be formalized in reconciliation of apostates and heretics as well as in the rites of confirmation (conferring the Holy Spirit).

The difference between the structure of penance in the patristic period and later periods is most significant. Many Christians recanted their belief during the persecutions in North Africa in Cyprian's time (third century), in order to avoid death. A significant number of these Christians looked to rejoin the community of believers once the persecutions ended and therefore, penance was a public matter, not one of private sin. A path of reconciliation was a central issue at the heart of the Donatist Controversy and no doubt prompted Cyprian to respond. The process of penance in the context of this period referred to the readmitting apostates and heretics back into the fold. It also referred to deathbed penance in cases in which a penitent was near death. Eventually, by the medieval period, anointing with "holy oil" took on the "same significance as the laying on of hands and substituting for it."¹¹¹

The structure of public penance shifted during the medieval period. "The seventh century *Lateran Ordo* has penitents receive the imposition of hands in a public ceremony at the beginning of Lent."¹¹² This public rite evolved into simply applying ashes to the forehead by the tenth century.¹¹³ The application of ashes on Ash Wednesday to mark the

¹¹⁰ Dallen, 228.

¹¹¹ Dallen, 236.

¹¹² Dallen, 237.

¹¹³ Dallen, 237.

beginning of Lent for Roman Catholics is currently in practice. “The development (of penance rituals) is uneven, but the de-emphasis on the imposition of hands, from the tenth century on, appears to correlate with the continuing decline of public penance, the rise of private penance and the use of indicative formula of absolution.”¹¹⁴

Dallen asserts that rituals related to private penance appear inconsistent and have regional differences. Laying on of hands continued in some places, but seems to have vanished from the ritual landscape with the rise of private penance and the eventual decline of the importance of community in religious life. “Gesture apparently gives way to words!”¹¹⁵ Eventually the “imposition of hands as a blessing of the penitent became a sign of the cross as the penitent entered the confessional; the imposition of hands in reconciliation became a lifting of the right hand toward the penitent and the sign of the cross during the absolution.”¹¹⁶ The sign of the cross is still Catholic practice.

Apostolic Tradition is a major source for reconstructing the liturgical practices of the church towards the end of the second century and into the early third century, including the laying on of hands for various purposes. Authorship has been attributed to Hippolytus (170-235), a Roman presbyter, anti-pope, and martyr. However, John F. Baldovin’s persuasive evidence suggests that this attribution is questionable and that Hippolytus may have even hailed from Alexandria, not Rome.¹¹⁷ Baldovin states that as a “piece of ‘living literature,’” the compilers evidently had some familiarity with

¹¹⁴ Dallen, 239.

¹¹⁵ Dallen, 242.

¹¹⁶ Dallen, 243–44.

¹¹⁷ John F. Baldovin, “Hippolytus and the Apostolic Tradition: Recent Research and Commentary,” *Theological Studies*, 64, 2003: 520–42, accessed September 24, 2013, www.ts.mu.edu/content/pdf/64/64.3/64.3.3.pdf, 542.

Hippolytus' works, and "some elements in the document have a second-century origin."¹¹⁸ However, it more closely reveals the transition to the church's liturgical structure of the third century. Regardless of the authorship, the document reflects early church liturgy and impartation of hands during the process of initiation and the rite of baptism.

During the early church era, the catechetical process was highly rigorous as described by the *Apostolic Tradition*, which seems puzzling in light of the persecutions. Thomas M. Finn theorizes that the liturgy helped Christianity to survive by becoming a process of socialization for both the catechumens as well as the community of believers. "Baptism and the other rites of incorporation compromised the *denouement* which initiated candidates into a remarkably effective kinship network symbolized by the image of the family household."¹¹⁹ Finn implies that it was precisely the rigor of the catechumen process that sealed the initiates' commitment to the community and beliefs to the degree that they were willing to endure persecution.

After an intense interview, catechumens who were accepted into the community of believers regularly experienced the laying on of hands as part of their initiation process. For approximately three years, catechumens received daily instruction, after which the instructor would lay hands and pray for each one. These catechumens were typically from communities that had no prior biblical knowledge. If they had any religious affiliations, they were for the most part pagan cults. The imposition of hands

¹¹⁸ Baldovin, 542.

¹¹⁹ Thomas M. Finn, "Ritual Process and the Survival of the Early Christianity: A Study of the Apostolic Tradition of Hippolytus," *Journal of the Ritual Studies* 3, no. 1: (December 1, 1989): 69–89, accessed September 20, 2013, *ATLA Religion Database with ATLASerials*, EBSCOhost, 79–80.

and prayer amounted to daily exorcism. “At the close of their prayer, when their instructor lays his hand upon the catechumens, he shall pray and dismiss them; whoever gives the instruction is to do this, whether a cleric or a layman.”¹²⁰ This indicates that the laying on of hands was not reserved for clergy at this point in time. Exorcism accompanied by imposition of hands occurred several times during the final initiation and baptism rituals as well.¹²¹

In New Testament references to exorcism, demons are typically cast out by rebuking them and commanding them to depart without the ritual of the laying on of hands. In the case of early church catechumens, however, it was accompanied by the laying on of hands, similar to healing but with a different attitude and intent. Healing and exorcism were seen as different in character. Tipei’s analysis concludes that “For Cyprian what distinguishes the gesture of healing from the gesture used in exorcism is not its form, but the character of the power used.”¹²² Laying on of hands for healing has the character of helping the sick person by imparting health, whereas when used with exorcism, it is an aggressive act toward ridding the demon.

Imposition of hands for healing, as well as for impartation of the Holy Spirit, has enormous documentation throughout the history of Christendom, beginning with the ministry of Jesus and continuing with the ministries of the apostles as evidenced in Scripture (see Table 3.2). The history of the church throughout the ages indicates that the imperative to pray for the sick, to lay hands for the reception of the Holy Spirit, and to lay

¹²⁰ Burton Scott Easton, trans., *The Apostolic Tradition of Hippolytus of Rome* (Hamden, CT: Archon Books, 1962), 43.

¹²¹ Easton, 45–47.

¹²² Tipei, 142.

hands for the purpose of ordination continues into contemporary times. The fifth century writings of Augustine (354–430) are particularly significant in establishing rites for the Western Church. With regard to the reception of the Holy Spirit, Augustine states,

For the Holy Spirit is not only given by the laying on of hands amid the testimony of temporal sensible miracles, as He was given in former days to be the credentials of a rudimentary faith, and for the extension of the first beginnings of the Church. For who expects in these days that those on whom hands are laid that they may receive the Holy Spirit should forthwith begin to speak with tongues? But it is understood that invisibly and imperceptibly, on account of the bond of peace, divine love is breathed into their hearts, so that they may be able to say, “Because the love of God is shed abroad in our hearts by the Holy Ghost which is given unto us.” . . . At any rate, outside the bond that love cannot exist, without which all the other requisites, even if they can be recognized and approved, cannot profit or release from sin. But the laying on of hands in reconciliation to the Church is not, like baptism, incapable of repetition; for what is it more than a prayer offered over a man?¹²³

Augustine asserts that the Holy Spirit was given to provide credence to the “rudimentary faith” (referring to Hebrews 6:2) and to establish the Christian faith in its infancy through the impartation of hands for miracles. Augustine continues this line of thought by asking a rhetorical question in which he clearly indicates that the expectation of receiving the gift of speaking in tongues through the imposition of hands is no longer present. His understanding is that the impartation of the Holy Spirit is to impart love. The possibility of signs, wonders, and miracles is not denied, but it is left purely to the sovereignty of God and not to any impartations of *charismata* through human agency. This argument marks an important text for cessationist theology and its controversies centuries later.

¹²³ Augustine of Hippo, “On Baptism Against the Donatists (Book III, 16–21),” in *Augustine: The Writings Against the Manichaeans and Against the Donatists*, edited by Philip Schaff, *Christian Classics Ethereal Library*, accessed October 12, 2013, <http://www.ccel.org/ccel/schaff/npnfl04.v.iv.v.xvi.html>.

Augustine's writings against the Donatists also reveal the fact that laying on of hands continued into the fourth and fifth centuries with the expectation of impartation of the Holy Spirit. In the same text, the imposition of hands is mentioned as part of the ritual for reconciliation of sinners specific to the fourth century Donatist schism. For the fourth century African church, the Diocletian persecution was finally over. However, the fallout of that purge against Christianity created a great controversy that divided the African church, and prompted Augustine of Hippo to use his most persuasive means for nearly thirty years in the pursuit of ending the schism.¹²⁴ The edicts of the Roman persecution required bishops to recant and surrender ecclesiastical objects and documents under pain of death. Some chose martyrdom and these became the heroes of the church. Many others chose to save lives by acquiescing to Roman demands.

Essentially, the controversy within the African church was about what to do with those who had recanted during the persecution and afterwards wanted to rejoin the church. In addition, controversy was raised over whether or not the sacraments of baptism and ordination that were administered by those bishops, called *traditores* (surrenderers), would be valid. Followers of Donatus of Casae Nigrae, the *pars Donati* (Donatist party), insisted that the sacraments performed by *traditores* are invalid.¹²⁵ They required rebaptism based on the loss of the Spirit of those who surrendered their faith, and also based on Donatist loyalty to the succession of the martyrs who died rather than

¹²⁴ Catherine Batten Balk, "Augustine and the Donatists," *Chicago Theological Seminary Register* 86, no. 3 (September 1, 1996): 12–24, accessed October 12, 2013, *ATLA Religion Database with ATLASerials*, EBSCOhost, 12–13.

¹²⁵ Peter Kaufman, "Augustine, Evil, and Donatism: Sin and Sanctity Before the Pelagian Controversy," *Theological Studies* 51, no. 1 (March 1, 1990): 115–26, accessed October 12, 2013, *ATLA Religion Database with ATLASerials*, EBSCOhost, 117.

recant their faith. Augustine's position, which was the official position of the Catholic Church, was to remove *traditores* from office and receive them back into the fold, but the sacraments, ordinations, and consecration they performed remained valid.¹²⁶ They determined that the efficacy of sacraments did not depend on the purity or status of the one administering the sacrament.

Augustine's view was that receiving the *traditores* back into the fold by the laying on of hands and prayer is not the same as baptism. For Augustine, baptism is the release from original sin and entry into church membership, and laying on of hands for reconciliation may be repeated many times, but baptism is "incapable of repetition." Therefore, the rebaptizing demand of the Donatists was invalid. Based on Augustine's text *On Baptism Against the Donatists*, Augustine's understanding of the efficacy of laying on of hands for reconciliation may be summed up simply as something done in conjunction with prayer having no implication that an observable spiritual substance is transferred or imparted.

Beyond noting the reconciliation of apostates, Augustine's writing carries a seed of cessationist theology, the belief that the working of miracles operated with the purpose of evangelizing and spreading the faith, and it ended with the first apostles as mission accomplished. This includes the denial of gift of tongues as evidence of the baptism in the Holy Spirit after the first apostles. In his *Of True Religion* 47, Augustine's states his position clearly, although he did not entirely discount the miraculous.

When the Catholic Church had been founded and diffused throughout the whole world, on the one hand miracles were not allowed to continue till our time, lest

¹²⁶ J. Patout Burns, "Establishing Unity in Diversity," *Perspectives in Religious Studies* 32 no. 4, (December 1, 2005): 381–99, accessed October 12, 2013, *ATLA Religion Database with ATLASerials*, EBSCOhost, 390.

the mind should always seek visible things, and the human race should grow cold by becoming accustomed to things which when they were novelties kindled its faith.¹²⁷

Cessationism was later affirmed by the Reformers in the seventeenth century, but was seriously challenged as the church experienced the revivals of the Holy Spirit in Pentecostal/Charismatic movements so widespread in the twentieth century and on through present times.

In early writings, as well as throughout the centuries of Christian history, impartation of the Holy Spirit accompanied by the laying on of hands appears in the context of confirmation (known as chrismation in Eastern Orthodox traditions), which was regarded as the reception of the Holy Spirit for new believers. This type of writing is also found in the context of the ordination of ministers. In the early church, catechumens received baptism and confirmation (reception of the Holy Spirit) accompanied by imposition of hands along with participation in the Eucharist as part of the same ceremony.¹²⁸ In Eastern Orthodox traditions, Christian initiation included baptism, chrismation, and access to the Eucharist, which are also given in the same manner.¹²⁹ For the Eastern Orthodox tradition, “As the early church grew and bishops could no longer personally officiate at each baptismal liturgy, their laying-on of hands was replaced by chrismation, an anointing with holy oil consecrated by each bishop and administered by

¹²⁷ Augustine, “*Of True Religion*, 47,” in Jon Mark Ruthven, *On the Cessation of the Charismata: The Protestant Polemic on Post-Biblical Miracles*, rev. and expanded ed. (Tulsa, OK: Word and Spirit Press, 2011), 18.

¹²⁸ *The Apostolic Tradition of Hippolytus of Rome*, 43.

¹²⁹ George D. Dragas, “The Seal of the Gift of the Holy Spirit: The Sacrament of Chrismation,” *Greek Orthodox Theological Review* 56, no. 104 (March 1, 2011): 143–59, accessed October 14, 2011, *ATLA Religion Database with ATLASerials*, EBSCOhost, 144.

his priests.”¹³⁰ Changes in the Roman Catholic tradition include separation of confirmation from baptism and confirmation conferred only by bishops, which remains the current praxis.

Laying on of hands for ordination was another context as noted by Amalarius of Metz (780–850/851 AD) in Book II of *Liber officialis* during the Carolingian period.¹³¹

XII—De deaconis

8. Now let us examine the consecration [of the deacon]. It is written in the aforementioned Acts of the Apostles: “and what they said pleased the whole multitude, and they chose Stephen, a man full of faith and the Holy Spirit, and Philip,” and a little later, “These they set before the apostles, and praying they laid their hands upon them.” 9. There is a certain little book [known] among us, which says that only the bishop is to impose hands on the deacon, “because he is not consecrated to the priesthood but to service.” Is the writer of this book more learned and more holy than the apostles, who place many hands on the deacons when they were consecrated? And on that account, when the bishop alone lays hands on the deacon, is he alone able to pray for the virtue of grace more than the many apostles prayed? 10. Or perhaps, therefore, the priest does not lay hands on him who is consecrated to the office of deacon, lest he make him what he is himself, that is, a priest? If this is the case, then neither is fitting for the bishop to lay hands on him, because he prays for him, he prays not alone, but with all who dutifully uphold the words of the bishop and his intention. The example for the bishops is the company of the apostles. It is best to follow good leaders, who have struggled to final victory.¹³²

The *Statuta ecclesiae antiqua* (SEA), a document containing ceremonial ordination practice dating to the late fifth century, is the “certain little book,” to which Amalarius refers. Amalarius is criticizing the imposition of hands on deacons only by

¹³⁰ Nectaria McLees, “The Seal of the Gift of the Holy Spirit: Preparing the Chrism at the Ecumenical Patriarchate,” *Road to Emmaus* 13, no. 3, (June 1, 2012): 49–71, accessed October 14, 2013, *ATLA Religion Database with ATLASerials*, EBSCOhost, 51.

¹³¹ John Gibaut, “Amalarius of Metz and the Laying on of Hands in the Ordination of a Deacon,” *Harvard Theological Review* 82, no. 2 (April 1, 1989): 233–40, accessed on October 10, 2103, *ATLA Religion Database with ATLASerials*, EBSCOhost, 233.

¹³² Gibaut, 233–34.

bishops. Gibault offers two possible explanations of the criticism. Either it challenges the use of symbolic gesture from antiquity or it is a “witness to an alternate and discrepant usage in the Frankish church, one in which presbyters as well as the bishop imposed hands on deacons.”¹³³ Amalarius, according to Gibault, was stating the latter, that two different types of liturgical practices were common in his day, one in which only the bishop imposes hands and the other in which the bishops and presbyters impose hands on the deacon.¹³⁴ Gibault further posits, “It is likely that the usage which Amalarius advocated was not limited to the Frankish church in this period, but was found in other parts of Europe.”¹³⁵

Gibault notes that prior to the third century, neither the episcopate nor the presbyterate had sacerdotal function. It evolved by the time of Cyprian in the mid-third century.¹³⁶

The emphasis on the sacerdotal definition of the episcopate and presbyterate affected the diaconate and the minor orders as well. As the presbyter became more associated with the Levitical “priest” of the Old Testament, so the deacon became associated with the “Levite,” his liturgical assistant and subordinate.¹³⁷

The conclusion Gibault draws is not that Amalarius’ disagreement is surprising, but rather that the imposition of hands would have needed defense. Nevertheless, the benefit

¹³³ Gibaut, 235.

¹³⁴ Gibaut, 236.

¹³⁵ Gibaut, 236.

¹³⁶ Gibaut, 238.

¹³⁷ Gibaut, 238–239.

of Amalarius' work is in being a record of the state of eighth and ninth century liturgy at the time when transitions from ancient rites were taking place.¹³⁸

The medieval period concentrated on refining and defining rituals and liturgy. It also focused on the role and duties of bishops and presbyters. Ralph W. Quere's research shows that "The increase of sacrificial language and of ceremonial actions further characterizes medieval developments."¹³⁹ The greatest change during the medieval period and into the Reformation was the language of the prayers during the ritual of imposition of hands. Early Western church prayers of the bishop, as well as continuing Eastern rites, beseech the impartation of the Holy Spirit while laying hands on the catechumen as recorded in the *Apostolic Tradition* and quoted by Quere.

Pour forth now that power (*virtutem*) which is from Thee, the princely Spirit (*principalis spiritus*), which thou gavest to thy beloved Son, Jesus Christ, which he gave to the holy Apostles, who established in every place the Church. . . . impart to him the Spirit of grace and counsel for presbyters so that he may support and govern thy people.¹⁴⁰

Quere notes that changes by the tenth century shifted the language from beseeching to bestowing the Holy Spirit. "Let thy Holy Spirit be with this man as a bestower of heavenly gifts."¹⁴¹ The earlier prayer emphasizes the Holy Spirit as the bestower of grace and empowerment. Throughout the Reformation, the rite of various Protestant groups kept the "bestower" formula and Reformers contended, "God acts

¹³⁸ J. Goggin, "Amalarius of Metz," in *New Advent: The Catholic Encyclopedia* (New York, NY: Robert Appleton, 1907), accessed October 11, 2013, <http://www.newadvent.org/cathen/01376b.htm>.

¹³⁹ Ralph W. Quere, "The Spirit and the Gifts Are Ours: Imparting or Imploring the Spirit in Ordination Rites?" *Lutheran Quarterly* 27, no. 4 (November 1, 1975): 322–46, accessed October 13, 2013, *ATLA Religion Database with ATLASerials*, EBSCOhost, 322.

¹⁴⁰ Quere, 322–23.

¹⁴¹ Quere, 325.

through the human act of imposition.”¹⁴² In the eighteenth century, Wesley dropped the distinctions between bishops, priests, and deacons, preferring to see them all as ministers, but still kept the “bestower” language for ordination.¹⁴³

To summarize at this point, evidence of the ritual of imposition of hands from the earliest times through the centuries until the twentieth century is found in six main categories: initiation for new Christians in exorcism, baptism, and confirmation (chrismation); reconciliation of apostates and absolution of sinners; ordination; and prayer for the sick. During the earliest church years before the institutionalization and founding of the ecclesiastical hierarchy of the church, the administration of the laying on of hands was available to laity as well as clergy. Within the first few centuries, rituals, liturgies, formalized prayers, and ceremonies were created, and the class of clergy was assigned sacerdotal duties distinct from laity. Baptism and confirmation (chrismation) were marks of entry into the family of God and reconciliation absolved the sinner. Hands imposed on the sick with accompanying prayer had the expectation of healing and/or forgiveness upon impending death (Catholic sacrament of extreme unction).

Holy Spirit Revivals and Impartations

The eighteenth century saw an ebb and flow of times of revival characterized by sudden commitments to Christ and explosive growth of church membership as a result of a movement of the Holy Spirit. Examples include the 1727 Pietist revival among

¹⁴² Quere, 330.

¹⁴³ Quere, 332.

Moravians of central Europe, and the 1735 Great Awakening in America with well-known preachers as Jonathan Edwards, George Whitefield, and John Wesley.

Revival of healing ministry was known to happen from time to time in the American colonies and continued after Independence. Throughout the centuries, groups in America that promoted supernatural healing on the heels of revival, often accompanied by maltreatment, include the Society of Friends (Quakers), the United Society of Believers in Christ's Second Appearing (Shakers), Mormons, Noyesites, Adventists, and Wesleyan Holiness.¹⁴⁴ Imposition of hands while praying for healing remained a ritual in use throughout the centuries and by the various groups.

Wesleyan-Holiness groups were significant as antecedents of the Pentecostal movements of the twentieth century. The "second blessing" belief, which was described by Wesleyan-Holiness groups as an experience subsequent to conversion that emphasized Christian perfection, emerged from British Methodism of the nineteenth century.¹⁴⁵ Buschart explains that this second blessing was also associated with Wesleyan-Holiness and Higher Life movements, which taught that holiness is a "result of a second work of grace (entire sanctification), distinctly separate from and subsequent to the first work of grace (regeneration). This second work of grace results in purity of heart and power for living the Christian life."¹⁴⁶

The Holiness group called Irvingites, followers of Edward Irving (1792–1834) and the Catholic Apostolic Church he founded, included glossolalia and prophecy in their

¹⁴⁴ Margaret M. Poloma, "Old Wine, New Wineskins: The Rise of Healing Rooms in Revival Pentecostalism," *Pneuma* 28, no. 1 (March 1, 2006): 59–71, 60.

¹⁴⁵ W. David Buschart, *Exploring Protestant Traditions: An Invitation to Theological Hospitality* (Madison, WI: InterVarsity Press, 2006), 229.

¹⁴⁶ Buschart, 229.

doctrine. The Keswick Movement, a Higher Life movement originating in Northwestern England, differed from the Methodist-Holiness proponents in that they put more emphasis on the indwelling of the Holy Spirit. The Holiness groups throughout the United States became so diverse that more than twenty denominations were founded by the end of the nineteenth century, each with its own doctrinal focus.¹⁴⁷

William Kostlevy's essay, "The Social Vision of the Holiness Movement," explains radical evangelism of the nineteenth century in terms of a two-fold emphasis, religious revival and social transformation. He states, "Radical evangelism vigorously sought to purify church and state from such egregious sins as slaveholding, and in the years following the Civil War, racial prejudice, Sabbath desecration, complicity with the liquor traffic, and tolerating secret societies."¹⁴⁸ Kostlevy states that in 1897, it was "estimated that every fifth, or perhaps eighth, man belonged to one of the country's seventy thousand fraternal lodges."¹⁴⁹

Kostlevy explains the reasons for the exponential rate of emergent middle class males enrolling in secret societies like Freemasonry, the huge decline of males in traditional churches, and emergence of female influence in church settings. Female dominated religious movements focused on moral guardianship and consequently opposed alcohol consumption, smoking, attending theaters, and belonging to secret societies that drew attention away from church attendance. Lodges had quasi-religious rituals, but in effect they were akin to universalism. Radical evangelism, therefore, as

¹⁴⁷ Buschart, 230.

¹⁴⁸ William Kostlevy, "The Social Vision of the Holiness Movement," *The Holiness Manifesto*, eds. Kevin W. Mannoia, and Don Thorsen (Grand Rapids, MI: William B. Eerdmans, 2008), 93.

¹⁴⁹ Kostlevy, 95.

Kostlevy claims, was “deeply rooted in gender-related issues. Firmly convinced of the moral superiority of women, radical evangelicals saw a direct link among the lodge, liquor shop, gambling den, and brothel.”¹⁵⁰ The expansion of women in ministry during the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, including laying hands on people for healing and reception of the Holy Spirit, was influential in becoming normative in the twentieth century among Pentecostals and later, Charismatics.

Nineteenth century interest in utopian societies like Brook Farm, Fruitlands, Oneida, and Amana, were frequently founded on a philosophy or religion, and usually centered on a charismatic leader. Alexander Dowie, founder of the utopian-like community of Zion City, Illinois, and the Christian Catholic Church, introduced the concept of healing rooms at the turn of the twentieth century.¹⁵¹ Revivals of the late nineteenth century included reports of miraculous impartations. These revivals and miracles activated Dowie’s healing ministry as well and gave impetus to Pentecostalism.

John G. Lake, an early leader in Dowie’s Zion, is most know for establishing healing homes outside of Zion, particularly in Spokane and Portland, Washington.¹⁵² These healing homes were residential and followed Dowie’s model. He had joined Dowie’s movement after his wife was healed and he subsequently experienced the baptism of the Holy Spirit with empowerment for healing. Lake’s healing homes followed protocols for healing in which “healing technicians” laid hands on the sick and prayed for individuals. In both Zion and Lake’s healing homes, teams of technicians were

¹⁵⁰ Kostlevy, 104.

¹⁵¹ Poloma, 60–61.

¹⁵² Poloma, 61.

trained and worked in the homes.¹⁵³ Lake's healing ministry was specifically known for prayer for the sick accompanied by the laying on of hands.¹⁵⁴ The technicians did not depend on a sole "anointed" ordained minister to heal the sick, which points to a distinct shift in the expectation of who administers the laying on of hands for healing.

Although John G. Lake is associated with Pentecostalism, the founder of the Pentecostal Movement is often attributed to Charles Fox Parham (1873–1929), beginning at Bethel Bible College in Topeka, Kansas. On January 1, 1901, Agnes N. Ozman (1870–1937) asked Parham to lay hands upon her and pray for her to receive the baptism of the Holy Spirit with the evidence of speaking in tongues, which did occur.¹⁵⁵ William J. Seymour (1870–1922), a former student of Parham, led the Azusa Street Revival in Los Angeles, California beginning in 1906, which became the hub for the spread of Pentecostalism that still continues to this day.¹⁵⁶

The central issue for Classic Pentecostalism is the belief that speaking in tongues is normative for Christian life and for the initial evidence of the baptism in the Holy Spirit. While the laying on of hands was practiced in early Pentecostal circles, it was not necessarily the main praxis or required for receiving the Holy Spirit. In these early years of Pentecostalism, believers "tarried" for the baptism of the Holy Spirit and imposition of hands was incidental. From the first issue in September 1906 of *The Apostolic Faith*, the newspaper printed by the original Azusa Street Mission, to the thirteenth issue dated May

¹⁵³ Poloma, 61–62.

¹⁵⁴ John G. Lake, *Lake, John G. The Complete Collection of His Life Teachings*, compiled by Roberts Liardon (Tulsa, OK: Albury, 1999).

¹⁵⁵ Buschart, 231.

¹⁵⁶ Buschart, 231.

1908, the writers reported several incidents of the use of “anointed handkerchiefs,” “tarrying,” and the laying on of hands.¹⁵⁷

Smaller and lesser-known holiness movements often fed the later Pentecostal Movement. For example, the Pentecostal Mission (not to be confused with Pentecostals of the Azusa Street revival) identified with the Holiness Movement and it held annual conventions between 1901 and 1907 in Nashville, Tennessee. This movement group focused on sanctification (the “second blessing”) as the baptism in the Holy Spirit and did not agree with the Azusa Street Pentecostals in the doctrine of tongues as the evidence of baptism in the Holy Spirit.¹⁵⁸

Besides being proponents of “second blessing” theology, the Pentecostal Mission like other Holiness groups placed considerable attention to apocalyptic themes. The transition at the turn of the twentieth century in 1900 was linked to the ushering in of the end times. This produced much nationwide anxiety much like it did in 2000. “Eleventh Hour Workers” became associated with Holiness groups in 1899 and as Hoskins states, it “created a very interesting ecumenicity based on sanctificationist theology and apocalyptic revivalism.”¹⁵⁹ When the Lord did not return in 1900, the efforts shifted to missionary endeavors as well as developing training colleges to prepare ministers for

¹⁵⁷ William J. Seymour, ed. *The Azusa Street Papers: A Reprint of The Apostolic Faith Mission Publications, Los Angeles, California (1906–1908)* (Foley, AL: Harvest Publications, 1997).

¹⁵⁸ Steven T. Hoskins, “A Forgotten Ecumenical Mo(ve)ment in Music City, USA: J. O. McClurkan, N. J. Holmes, and the Pentecostal Mission Conventions of 1901–1907,” *Wesleyan Theological Journal* 43, no. 2 (September 1, 2008): 192–206, accessed August 30, 2013, *ATLA Religion Database with ATLASerials*. EBSCOhost, 192.

¹⁵⁹ Hoskins, 199.

their mission outreaches. An interesting ecumenism and multicultural inclusion emerged among holiness and early Pentecostals that challenged Jim Crow attitudes.

Such a diverse and interesting array of preachers which defied the social and theological conventions of the day—African-Americans and White Americans worshipping beside each other in the Jim Crow South, a Yankee Episcopal preaching the charisma and grace of the second blessing to Southerners who had seceded from their own denominations, inter-denominational prayer meetings and revivals held in building owned by undenominationalists and denominationalists alike—all combined to make the PM [Pentecostal Mission] a veritable ecumenical movement in its own right, if only for a short time.¹⁶⁰

The same diversity appeared in the Azusa Street revival as reported in the newspapers of its day. Issues related to glossolalia became the dividing point between classic Pentecostals and Holiness groups. It also prompted the end of the Pentecostal Mission in Tennessee.

The Pentecostal Movement emanating from the Azusa Street revival was not without controversy even within its own ranks. Controversy over whether sanctification is a two-step process or a three-step process created divisions among Pentecostals. The Pentecostal-Holiness Church, Church of God, and Church of God in Christ denominations followed their Wesleyan-Holiness roots in the three-step viewpoint.¹⁶¹ They maintained that a second and distinct work of grace called sanctification follows conversion and then the baptism in the Holy Spirit is a third step in the Christian's life. The two-step view from which the Assemblies of God emerged, saw conversion as including sanctification in the "Finished Work" of Christ on Calvary, and is subsequently

¹⁶⁰ Hoskins, 200.

¹⁶¹ Buschart, 233.

followed by the baptism of the Holy Spirit.¹⁶² William Durham coming from a non-Wesleyan background popularized this view.¹⁶³ Other denominations that also followed the Finished Work view were the International Church of the Foursquare Gospel, the Pentecostal Church of God in America, and the Open Bible Standard Churches.¹⁶⁴ This schism still accounts for half believing in the two-step model and the other half in the three-step model.

To further complicate the scene, another schism over the doctrine of the Trinity occurred early in the movement. An influential voice, Frank J. Wart (1876–1947), proposed that Jesus “was the name of God, and that ‘Father,’ ‘Son’ and ‘Holy Ghost’ were simply ways of referring to different roles or functions of God, not to three persons of a Godhead.”¹⁶⁵ The Oneness doctrine became a serious threat to the movement and drew many away from their newly formed denominations. The Pentecostal Assemblies of the World was established along with other Oneness denominations like the Pentecostal Church, Incorporated, and the United Pentecostal Church. Approximately one-fifth of classic Pentecostals are currently of the Oneness persuasion.¹⁶⁶

Heather D. Curtis’s article in *Religion and American Culture* traces the responses, attitudes, conclusions, and criticisms of the Pentecostal Movement in the early twentieth century. She particularly discusses the connection to psychology that leading evangelicals

¹⁶² Buschart, 233.

¹⁶³ Buschart, 233.

¹⁶⁴ Buschart, 233.

¹⁶⁵ Buschart, 234.

¹⁶⁶ Buschart, 234.

attributed to the ecstatic manifestations and experiences of believers in the early Pentecostal movements. Early in the movement, both the news media and traditional denomination and religious organization leaders describe Pentecostals as having mental illness, fits, delusions, or demonization.¹⁶⁷

The Holiness group fiercely debated the veracity of the movement and joined traditional Protestants in debunking the movement.¹⁶⁸ The new psychological work of William James during this early time period offered some understanding and rationale for the unusual ecstatic manifestations seen at Azusa Street and in the evangelistic services led by evangelists like Maria B. Woodworth-Etter.¹⁶⁹ Spiritual manifestations were attributed to the subconscious mind. Pentecostals were also lumped into the same category as the relatively new and popular mind-cure and healing movements like Christian Science and New Thought, as well as “other worldly” spiritualism.¹⁷⁰

Participants were described as falling “under the power of the Holy Spirit,” experiencing visions, shouting for joy, screaming for mercy, and jumping up from sickbeds.¹⁷¹ Miraculous healings were seen as proof of God’s ability and will through the power of the Holy Spirit on behalf of believers. Woodworth-Etter’s style of evangelism, characterized by trances and various other manifestations, was under particular scrutiny by Higher Life evangelicals. A.B. Simpson, founder of the Christian Missionary Alliance

¹⁶⁷ Heather Curtis, “A Sane Gospel: Radical Evangelicals, Psychology, and Pentecostal Revival in the Twentieth Century,” *Religion and American Culture* 21, no. 2 (June 1, 2011): 195–226, accessed August 30, 2013, *ATLA Religion Database with ATLASerials*, EBSCOhost, 197.

¹⁶⁸ Curtis, “A Sane Gospel,” 196.

¹⁶⁹ Curtis, “A Sane Gospel,” 196.

¹⁷⁰ Curtis, “A Sane Gospel,” 199.

¹⁷¹ Curtis, “A Sane Gospel,” 200.

(an interdenominational organization), criticized individuals who claimed “the laying on of their hands produces the most wonderful physical manifestations, prostrations and other evidences of power.”¹⁷² During the 1885 Christian Convention at the New York Gospel Tabernacle, Simpson contended it was a dangerous form of fanaticism that promoted “rash and unscriptural views.”¹⁷³

In response to some Pentecostals interpreting their experience as being totally possessed by the Holy Spirit and not being in control of themselves, A. B. Simpson stated that an essential sign of being Spirit-filled was to “exercise a clear intelligent judgment,” and to “act independently on personal conviction.”¹⁷⁴ The Emmanuel Movement further complicated matters with theories of hypnotic healing. Simpson became concerned about the possibility of “spiritual pollution,” meaning opening oneself to evil spirits as a result of hypnotism or trances. Nevertheless, according to Curtis, Simpson carefully did not totally dismiss the revival as authentic even though he continued to assert that speaking in tongues is not necessary as evidence of Holy Spirit baptism.¹⁷⁵

Carrie Judd Montgomery (1858–1946), well-known faith healer and evangelist, also spoke of concern for possession of evil spirits when submitting to clairvoyants and spiritualist healers. Instead of rejecting Pentecostalism outright, Judd Montgomery did not allow herself emotional manifestations in receiving the Holy Spirit baptism, but

¹⁷² Curtis, “A Sane Gospel,” 201.

¹⁷³ Curtis, “A Sane Gospel,” 201.

¹⁷⁴ Curtis, “A Sane Gospel,” 199.

¹⁷⁵ Curtis, “A Sane Gospel,” 199.

rather followed her more conservative temperament.¹⁷⁶ She did pursue the Pentecostal baptism with speaking in tongues in 1908, but continued to assert that she did not experience any emotional displays like shaking.¹⁷⁷ She relied on a psychological explanation of temperament to explain why some experienced emotional displays while others did not.

Aimee Semple McPherson (1890–1944), Pentecostal healer and founder of the International Church of the Foursquare Gospel, recounts the events of the Azusa Street revival in her book, *Fire From on High*, in which she states, “Believers were filled with the Spirit and shouted the praise of God as the Spirit gave utterance. The noise of their joyous praises filled the sky. The glimpse which believers caught of the Church body, and of the plan of God to restore the Church to her full Pentecostal power and life caused them to cry aloud before the glorious vision.”¹⁷⁸ She describes the early Pentecostal “tarrying meetings” as a method of receiving the baptism in the Holy Spirit, even though she is known to have practiced the laying on of hands for healing and receiving the Holy Spirit. McPherson describes spiritual manifestations as follows.

We have our tarrying meetings for the Baptism of the Holy Spirit first, and counsel all to be endued with power for service. And the power does fall! The Upper Room is the scene of old time Pentecostal demonstration and power. Saints are swept down under the power of God and, filled with the Spirit, they speak with other tongues as did they of the Upper Room so long ago.¹⁷⁹

¹⁷⁶ Curtis, “A Sane Gospel,” 206.

¹⁷⁷ Curtis, “A Sane Gospel,” 206.

¹⁷⁸ Aimee Semple McPherson, *Fire From on High* ([Los Angeles, CA]: Heritage Committee, 1969), 175.

¹⁷⁹ McPherson, 149–50.

Central to the theology of Pentecostalism is the emphasis on the person and work of the Holy Spirit and the importance of the baptism in the Holy Spirit. It is considered distinct from and subsequent to conversion with the initial evidence being glossolalia. Buschart states, “The baptism in the Spirit is not merely to be tolerated or even allowed for; rather, it is to be desired, sought after and prayed for, as it is an essential part of God’s equipping of the church for the ministries that God has given to the church.”¹⁸⁰ The emphasis here is not only impartation for personal spirituality, but for service. The power for ministry is accompanied with gifts of the Holy Spirit and thus, as Buschart states, “will always be the principal means through which God builds the church.”¹⁸¹

By the middle of the twentieth century, a short-lived but influential movement took place that significantly changed Pentecostal praxis. The New Order of the Latter Rain Movement (shortened to the Latter Rain Movement and not to be confused with the nineteenth century Holiness Latter Rain Movement) emphasized charismatic gifts, speaking in tongues, prophecy, and eschatological concerns. Most notably, however, was its emphasis on the laying on of hands for impartation of blessing, spiritual gifts, and infilling of the Holy Spirit.

Prior to 1948 the general Pentecostal practice for receiving the baptism in the Holy Spirit was to “tarry,” that is, to pray and wait on God for an outward manifestation and signs following based on Acts 2, when the disciples waited in the Upper Room for the Holy Spirit’s empowerment. Lake’s healing rooms were exceptions as was the practice of ordained ministers laying on hands for impartations. Imposing hands in the

¹⁸⁰ Buschart, 247.

¹⁸¹ Buschart, 250.

Latter Rain Movement opened the practice to all believers. Richard Riss explains subsequent controversy on the practice. “With the onset of the 1948 revival, the practice of the laying on of hands accompanied by prophecy became controversial, due partly to its interference with the custom of ‘tarrying,’ for the Spirit, and partly because some people were said to have uncritically accepted whatever had been spoken to them as a God-given prophecy.”¹⁸²

Characteristics of both the Pentecostal Azusa Street Revival (1906) and the Latter Rain Movement included the following: (1) both emphasized God doing a “new thing” based on interpretation of Isaiah 43:19; (2) both viewed the revival as a fresh revelation from God; (3) both recognized the present day existence of the ministries of apostle, prophet, evangelist, pastor, and teacher; (4) both emphasized immediate repentance in preparation for the imminent second coming of Jesus; (5) both were severely criticized by the denomination groups from which large numbers of followers emerged.¹⁸³

It could be said that the Latter Rain Movement of 1948 was launched at the 1947 First World Pentecostal Conference in Zurich with the address of David J. DuPlessis’ speech, which invoked the outpouring of the Holy Spirit and somewhat prophetic words that it would “probably cause chaos in our regular programs.”¹⁸⁴ Occurring between 1948 and 1952, the movement paralleled and even to some degree became the catalyst for healing revivals led by well-known evangelists such as William Branham, Oral Roberts,

¹⁸² Richard M. Riss, “Latter Day Rain Movement,” *Encyclopedia of Religious Revivals in America*, vol. 1, ed. Michael McClymond, (Westport, CT: Greenwood Press, 2007), 241.

¹⁸³ Riss, “Latter Day Rain Movement,” *Encyclopedia of Religious Revivals in America*, 241.

¹⁸⁴ Richard Riss, “The Latter Day Rain Movement of 1948,” *Pneuma* 4, no. 1 (March 1, 1982): 32–45, 32.

Kathryn Kuhlman, T.L. Osborn, Gordon Lindsay, Jack Coe, A.A. Allen, to name a few. Some of these ministers continued their work well into the late twentieth century.¹⁸⁵

Historian Cornelius J. Jaenen tells of a prophecy well-known among Canadian Pentecostals that was given in 1906 at the Azusa Street Revival in Los Angeles, which stated that a great revival would begin in Northern Canada.¹⁸⁶ The events of revival in North Battlefield, Saskatchewan, in 1948 commencing the Latter Rain Movement was taken as fulfillment of that prophecy. On February 12, 1948, revival broke out at Saskatchewan Church of the Foursquare Gospel (Sharon Orphanage and Schools) led by Herrick Holt, P. G. Hunt, and George Hawtin. Ernest Hawtin, brother of George Hawtin, recorded the events as follows:

Some students were under the power of God on the floor, others were kneeling in adoration and worship before the Lord. The anointing deepened until the awe of God was upon everyone. The Lord spoke to one of the brethren. "Go and lay hand upon a certain student and pray for him." While he was in doubt and contemplation one of the sisters who had been under the power of God went to the brother saying the same words, and naming the identical student he was to pray for. He went in obedience and a revelation was given concerning the student's life and future ministry. After this a long prophecy was given with minute details concerning the great thing God was about to do. The pattern for the revival and many details concerning it were given.¹⁸⁷

Besides an emphasis on the unity of the Body of Christ, additional emphasis was placed on receiving *charismata* (spiritual gifts) imparted through the laying on of hands rather than the former practice of "tarrying."¹⁸⁸ The early Pentecostal revival also

¹⁸⁵ Richard Riss, "The Latter Day Rain Movement of 1948," 32–33.

¹⁸⁶ Richard Riss, "The Latter Day Rain Movement of 1948," 38.

¹⁸⁷ Ernest Hawtin, "How This Revival Began," *The Sharon Star* (August 1, 1949, p. 3), quoted in Richard Riss, "The Latter Day Rain Movement of 1948," *Pneuma* 4, no. 1 (March 1, 1982): 32–45, 39.

¹⁸⁸ Riss, *Pneuma*, 36.

employed laying on of hands to receive the baptism of the Holy Spirit as testified by renowned Pentecostals like Smith Wigglesworth, Stanley Frodsham, Maria B. Woodworth-Etter, and Agnes Ozman, all of whom received the baptism by laying on of hands.¹⁸⁹ The difference is that the laying on of hands was not emphasized as strongly by the early Pentecostals as it was by the Latter Rain adherents.

As described by leading Pentecostal historian Richard Riss, it did not take long for the Latter Rain revival to spread. People from all over America flocked to Canada and brought what they received back to their homeland. Students from Sharon were invited to minister in churches across Canada and the United States. Revival through contact with Sharon was sparked at Glad Tidings Temple in Vancouver, Bethesda Missionary Temple in Detroit, and the founding of Elim Bible Institute in the Rochester, New York area. Pastors and congregants, mostly from Pentecostal circles, far and wide came to the meetings, and some left their denominations to join the movement. It spread quickly to the United States and then abroad. Stanley Frodsham, pioneer of the Assemblies of God, visited Bethesda and was impressed by the revival.¹⁹⁰ As editor of the *Pentecostal Evangel*, the Assemblies of God official publication, he approved of the revival in spite of some excesses. Under pressure to recant his position, Frodsham resigned from the publication and withdrew his licensure as an ordained minister in the Assemblies of God.¹⁹¹

¹⁸⁹ Riss, *Pneuma*, 37.

¹⁹⁰ Riss, *Pneuma*, 40–41.

¹⁹¹ Riss, *Pneuma*, 40–41.

As with most movements, the Latter Rain Movement drew some loud criticism, ironically a great deal from Pentecostal groups who experienced the same type of criticism a few decades earlier. One of the Latter Rain doctrines under scrutiny stated that the *charismata* is present in human vessels.¹⁹² Their practice of imparting spiritual gifts by the presbytery (at least two elders) typically included laying on of hands and speaking prophecy that identified the gift conveyed as well as any instructions for its use. To clarify and refute the charge that leaders passed on their gifts, R. E. McAlister wrote a booklet, *The Manifestations of the Spirit*, where he argued “that gifts are resident in the triune God, and neither received, imparted, nor confirmed in humans, but manifested.”¹⁹³ This important point still seems to resonate among proponents of impartation.

Sadly, excesses in prophesying personal directives that turned out badly did occur, such as prophesying marital partnerships that ended in divorce.¹⁹⁴ Another doctrinal controversy arose over the doctrine regarding tongues. Latter Rain followers claimed that tongues (glossolalia) were real languages imparted supernaturally for the purpose of missionary work and some took this literally to an unsuccessful end.¹⁹⁵

Pentecostal detractors also scrutinized the Latter Rain concepts of religious authority. Preachers of the Latter Rain often used biblical proof texts loosely to substantiate their message, claiming that their doctrines came from the Spirit, and they

¹⁹² L. Thomas Holdcroft, “The New Order of the Latter Rain,” *Pneuma* 2, no. 2 (September 1, 1980): 46–60, 49.

¹⁹³ Holdcroft, 50.

¹⁹⁴ Holdcroft, 50.

¹⁹⁵ Holdcroft, 50.

put greater stock in their mystical experiences than solid biblical exegeses.¹⁹⁶ L. Thomas Holdcroft concludes, “Thus, what appeared to be a Bible-based ministry, was actually the presentation of arbitrary personal opinion, with Scripture serving only as a convenient backdrop.”¹⁹⁷ In general, they rejected denominational control, preferring independence in order to respect the restored apostolic guidance rather than democratic decision-making. Also, unable to support full-time missionaries, their mission program amounted to itinerant preaching rather than the sending and supporting of missionaries as often found within denominations.¹⁹⁸

Closely connected to the Latter Rain Movement was the ministry of William Branham, who seemingly launched his ministry of healing and prophecy at the Sharon Bible School in North Battlefield, Saskatchewan. Both Latter Rain Movement followers and Branham’s ministry operated in Pentecostal circles; both were severely criticized and rejected within Pentecostal denominations; and both played an inspirational role in the Charismatic Movement of the 1960s and 1970s.¹⁹⁹ Riss states, “Its emphasis upon ‘laying on of hands with prophecy,’ and insistence upon the present-day existence of apostles and prophets brought considerable controversy in many Pentecostal churches, particularly over the insistence of present-day prophets and apostles.”²⁰⁰ Branham, considered a prophet, regularly employed the imposition of hands in his healing ministry. He was also

¹⁹⁶ Holdcroft, 51.

¹⁹⁷ Holdcroft, 51.

¹⁹⁸ Holdcroft, 52.

¹⁹⁹ Riss, *Pneuma*, 35.

²⁰⁰ Riss, *Pneuma*, 35.

known for identifying the illness by supernatural means as well as personal information about individuals he has not previously known (spiritual gift of word of knowledge).

While the doctrines of Latter Rain and the ministry of Branham were not well received by traditional denominations or established main Pentecostal denominations, they found acceptance in fringe and independent groups.²⁰¹ Mainline Pentecostal denominations generally criticized the Latter Rain Movement and Branham's ministry in the same type of criticism they themselves had experienced from Protestant denominations when Pentecostalism first broke out. However, in spite of controversy and condemnation, the revival continued and eventually transformed into the later Charismatic Movement, which spread globally. The Latter Rain emphasis of the ritual of the laying on of hands with the expectation of receiving the Holy Spirit, of receiving *charismata*, and of receiving healing continued throughout the twentieth century and is still in common practice. Other practices such as spiritual singing and dancing, the doctrine of foundational offices in Ephesians 4:11, tabernacle teaching, the Feast of Tabernacles, and truths of Hebrews 6:1-2 have survived as well.²⁰²

By the end of the 1950s, the Latter Rain Movement, as originally instituted, had subsided and transformed over the next two decades. The Charismatic publication *Logos Journal* grew out of the *Herald of Faith/Harvest Time*, edited by Joseph Mattsson-Boze and Gerald Derstine, who were leaders in the Latter Rain Movement.²⁰³ With the advent of television as a critical new form of mass media in the mid-twentieth century,

²⁰¹ R. M. Riss, "Latter Rain Movement," *The New International Dictionary of Pentecostal Charismatic Movements* (Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan, 2002), 831.

²⁰² Riss, *Pneuma*, 44.

²⁰³ Riss, *Encyclopedia of Religious Revivals in America*, 241.

televangelism was born. Evangelists like Oral Roberts broadcasted evangelistic crusades on television that included laying hands on people for healing.

The 1960s and 1970s saw the rise of the Charismatic Movement, which maintained the emphasis on experiencing the work of the Holy Spirit. Followers in this movement no longer required speaking in tongues as the initial evidence of the baptism in the Holy Spirit. Large numbers of Charismatics, who were members of traditional Protestant denominations and Catholics, remained in their churches rather than form new denominations. In addition, the demographics of Pentecostalism also expanded from the “working-class” which “appealed to societally marginalized people” to the middle and upper classes.²⁰⁴

Within denominational constructs, the movement took on the name of “renewal,” indicating that it was not something totally new, but rather a resurgence of what has been there all along but not emphasized. Catholic theologian Peter Hocken states that Vatican II (1962–1965) affirmed this language to describe the movement within the Roman Catholic Church, which extended the meaning to “renewal of liturgy, renewal of catechesis, renewal of religious life, renewal of parish life, etc.”²⁰⁵ For Pentecostals, however, the change in language from revival to renewal “represents a process of deformation.”²⁰⁶ Hocken makes a clear distinction between revival and renewal. Revival speaks of divine intervention and renewal of revitalization.

²⁰⁴ Buschart, 237.

²⁰⁵ Peter Hocken, “The Pentecostal-Charismatic Movement as Revival and Renewal,” *Pneuma* 3, no. 1 (March 1, 1981): 31–47, 38.

²⁰⁶ Hocken, 43.

Revival is a word characteristic of Evangelical-Pentecostal Christianity, that focuses on essentials, on central life-giving truths of biblical faith (Jesus, Holy Spirit, gospel, baptism in the Spirit); renewal is more the language of the historic churches, as they take the essential core truths and apply them to the wider life of the Church.²⁰⁷

Hocken prefers to see the movement as one of both revival and renewal, and makes a case for the importance of gifts of the Holy Spirit given for the benefit and unity of the church. He states, “The most fundamental difference between Catholic and Evangelical-Pentecostal ecclesiologies is that Catholics start from the church and then proceed to the Christian, whereas Evangelicals and Pentecostals start from the individual believer and only then consider the church.”²⁰⁸

Influenced by the Latter Rain Movement, the laying on of hands for the infilling of the Holy Spirit and *charismata* continued to be widely practiced among Pentecostals and Charismatics, but was no longer in the sole domain of the clergy, even among denominational Charismatics. All believers were encouraged to lay hands on one another for impartation of spiritual gifts, the infilling of the Holy Spirit, and healing. This critical shift in praxis had a slow beginning among Pentecostals and Charismatics, but became increasingly evident in the latter years of the twentieth century.

As the Charismatic Renewal of the 1960s and 1970s eventually appeared to lessen in intensity, the “Third Wave” (a term coined by C. Peter Wagner), sometimes referred to as Neo-Charismatic, took hold in the 1990s under the leadership of John Wimber,

²⁰⁷ Peter Hocken, “A Challenge from Donald Gee: How to Be Faithful to the Outpouring of the Holy Spirit in Pentecost,” *The Journal of the European Pentecostal Theological Association* 30, no. 1 (January 1, 2010): 34–47, 38.

²⁰⁸ Hocken, 42.

founder of the Vineyard churches.²⁰⁹ A noted departure in the Third Wave from prior movements was that it accepted glossolalia as a spiritual experience, but like Charismatics, did not insist on speaking in tongues as evidence of the Baptism of the Holy Spirit.

A service under Wimber's guidance typically had three parts: (1) lively, upbeat, and mellow music; (2) teaching that was relational and included personal testimony; (3) a more overt expression of charismatic gifts in the concluding 'ministry time.' Here individuals were invited to come forward and to experience the work of the Holy Spirit.²¹⁰

Vineyard Churches, led by John Wimber in the latter quarter of the twentieth century, shifted the focus to "ordinary" believers praying for one another to be healed rather than only ministers performing this function.

Bethel Church in Redding, California, under the leadership of Bill Johnson, revitalized the healing room concept, which was started by John G. Lake in the early twentieth century, and later reopened by Cal Pierce, a former elder at Bethel Church. Margaret Paloma, in her examination of current healing rooms, states, "John G. Lake's mantle for the establishment of healing seemed to have fallen on Cal Pierce and, with it, the unfolding of prophetic events."²¹¹ Third Wave believers currently often speak of impartation as special gifts manifested in the manner of one person that can be transferred or imparted to another, a theological position discussed in the theology foundations chapter. They draw this idea from the passing of Elijah's ministry to Elisha when Elijah's

²⁰⁹ Riss, *Encyclopedia of Religious Revivals in America*, 440.

²¹⁰ Riss, *Encyclopedia of Religious Revivals in America*, 467.

²¹¹ Paloma, 63.

mantle fell on Elisha (1 Kings 19, 2 Kings 2).²¹² This understanding of impartation is often accompanied by the laying on of hands and expressed during worship services among Third Wave celebrants.

Healing rooms in the manner of John G. Lake have been revitalized as the ever-expanding International Association of Healing Rooms (IAHR), and have moved healing from the church to the marketplace. This healing ministry follows Lake's foundational beliefs about healing, "that just as salvation comes through Jesus' atoning death, so does healing."²¹³ Where the current healing rooms differ from Lake is that IAHR does not "disparage modern medicine," and the training instructs practitioners to "soften the impact of a theology that would appear to 'blame the victim' for his or her illness."²¹⁴ The training manual specifically instructs practitioners to never make people feel "unable to receive healing because they lack 'faith' or are resisting the Holy Spirit."²¹⁵ Imposition of hands remains a key praxis.

Another Third Wave significant revival began in Canada. John and Carol Arnott are founders of the Toronto Airport Vineyard, which was later changed to Toronto Vineyard Christian Fellowship, and recently renamed again as Catch the Fire, Toronto. This church became the launching site of what is commonly called the Toronto Blessing that eventually drew an estimated two million visitors. As an aside, the Arnotts' visiting Carlos Annacondia, an Argentinian revivalist, greatly impacted and inspired them. John

²¹² Poloma, 63.

²¹³ Poloma, 66.

²¹⁴ Poloma, 60.

²¹⁵ Poloma, 60.

Arnott states that he returned from Argentina with an “impartation of faith for more of God and for miracles.”²¹⁶

The onset of the Toronto Blessing occurred when Randy Clark, then a Vineyard pastor from St. Louis, Missouri, led four revival services at the Toronto Airport Vineyard and the “fire fell” on January 29, 1994. Originally, Clark was skeptical about laughter as a manifestation of the Spirit, but while attending a Rodney Howard-Browne revival meeting in Tulsa, Oklahoma, he found himself on the floor laughing.²¹⁷ The “laughing revival,” as it was called, featured bodily manifestations including speaking in tongues, spiritual drunkenness, deep weeping, uncontrolled jerking, shaking, resting in the Spirit, bodies falling limply to the floor, and laughing.²¹⁸ Imposition of hands for healing and impartation of *charismata* has been, and continues to be, a significant praxis among the participants of this revival.

These manifestations were seen as evidence of the power and presence of God, but they were not without critics. In 1995, Toronto Airport Vineyard was forced to leave the Vineyard by John Wimber due to the “exotic” manifestations like roaring and barking that were tolerated at the church.²¹⁹ Even so, according to Margaret Poloma’s survey in 1995 and again in 1997, more than ninety percent of the respondents indicated that as a result of the impartations received, they had come to know God’s love in a new way.²²⁰

²¹⁶ Riss, *Encyclopedia of Religious Revivals in America*, 440.

²¹⁷ Riss, *Encyclopedia of Religious Revivals in America*, 440.

²¹⁸ Riss, *Encyclopedia of Religious Revivals in America*, 441.

²¹⁹ Riss, *Encyclopedia of Religious Revivals in America*, 441.

²²⁰ Riss, *Encyclopedia of Religious Revivals in America*, 441.

By 1996, a noticeable change in the revival included the emergence of named leaders and the development of networks, organizational structures, and the promoting of programs and work of revival. New prophetic and apostolic ministries like Partners in Harvest and School of Ministry emerged from the revival. Later in the 1990s the move saw a “golden revival” where visitors reported gold dental work and flakes of gold dust appearing.²²¹ Once more this was interpreted as a sign of God’s presence and power. “Soaking prayer,” a meditative form of prayer, continues to be a common practice among this group. Individuals typically lie on the floor (or choose to sit), meditate in prayer, often with music in the background, and receive spiritual impartations. Those involved in the Toronto Blessing insist that spiritual experiences using this practice are available to anyone even in the privacy of their homes.²²²

The Third Wave Movement is still in progress and is retaining the practice of the laying on of hands for impartation of the Holy Spirit, *charismata*, and healing. A more recent practice is what followers are calling “fire tunnel.” Two rows of believers line up facing each other with space between the rows. Congregants are invited to pass through the space while the lined-up members lay hands on them. In effect, a person can have dozens of people lay hands on them as they pass through the “tunnel,” and it may be accompanied by prophetic utterances from those who are imposing hands.

The reference to fire is belief in the impartation of the Holy Spirit alluding to the first Pentecost during which tongues of fire appeared on the disciples in the Upper Room. The expectation is for the impartation of blessing, empowerment, and/or *charismata*. No

²²¹ Riss, *Encyclopedia of Religious Revivals in America*, 441.

²²² Riss, *Encyclopedia of Religious Revivals in America*, 442.

previous language in past revivals or movements exists for “fire tunnels” as a liturgical ritual or even common praxis. Scriptural example for this ritual is also non-existent. However, having no prior reference does not disqualify it from being a practice within a particular religious group or it becoming a widespread norm. Nothing about it seems to be heretical and it may ultimately fall into the category of a fad, but it is too early to make any assessments as to its place in church history.

Randy Clark’s statement regarding the restoration of the gifts of the Spirit through the practice of the laying on of hands with prayer sums up the importance of imposition of hands for the Church in this age.

This new Pentecost, this restoration of the gifts of the Spirit, must also include a restoration of all the dimensions of the lost doctrine of the New Testament Church. And it must include the one elementary teaching most stolen from the Church by the devil—the doctrine of the laying on of hands, which included an understanding of the impartation both of the gifts and of the Holy Spirit Himself. Why has the devil fought so hard against this doctrine? Because of its power to bless the Church. For this reason, the devil fights by using misunderstanding and division within the Church to stop the restoration of the ministry of impartation. Until this doctrine is fully restored to the Church, she will not be able to claim that all grace is at work in her.²²³

Clark attributes the Church’s ignoring the doctrine of the laying on of hands to demonic activity that seeks to diminish its power. He underscores the importance of the work of the Holy Spirit in power and demonstration in ministry in the restoration of this practice.

Conclusions

The history of Christianity reveals that imposition of hands has been part of the human experience in concert with the divine for millennia. The laying on of hands is so

²²³ Randy Clark, *There Is More!: The Secret to Experiencing God’s Power to Change Your Life* (Bloomington, MN: Chosen Books, 2013), 208–9.

imbedded in religious activity that it is almost unnoticeable in the context of a ceremony or ritual. Consequently, the topic of imposition of hands would indeed be a rare teaching or sermon in a church setting. Yet it is not insignificant. It is normative behavior for Christian rituals, and continues to be used as a transfer agent in the process of charismatic experiences that include healing, blessing, affirmation of authority or position, accusation of wrongdoings, forgiveness, absolution, impartation of *charismata*, and infilling of the Holy Spirit. Furthermore, Hebrews 6:2 distinctively lists the laying on of hands as a fundamental doctrine of Christianity.

In each movement and revival throughout the ages, the source and substance of what is transferred has never been the person laying on hands, but rather that of God imparting grace through the agency of human hands. The authority to impose hands may have shifted from all believers to clergy and back again, but the efficacy of the practice has remained steadfast. When hands are imposed, believers receive impartations that are significant to their spirituality, and even physically as in the case of healing. Believers find strength, peace, and absolution. Ordination accompanied by imposition of hands acknowledges and activates ministers to serve the Body of Christ. Impartations of *charismata* for service benefit the believer, the church, and the world. The highest and best, however, is the reception of the Holy Spirit in the life of the believer. The laying on of hands is not required in any of these actions, but the love of God invites participation in blessing and impartation through the agency of human hands.

CHAPTER FOUR

THEOLOGICAL FOUNDATIONS

Introduction

Hebrews 6:1–3 specifically mentions several foundational and elementary teachings, called doctrines in the King James Version, and instruction in other translations like the English Standard Version and New International Version.

Therefore leaving the elementary teaching about the Christ, let us press on to maturity, not laying again a foundation of repentance from dead works and of faith toward God, of instruction about washings and laying on of hands, and the resurrection of the dead and eternal judgment. And this we will do, if God permits (NASB).²²⁴

Sometimes the most obvious things are hidden from conscious awareness. Such is the case with the doctrine of the laying on of hands, although the intent is not to hide. Basically, it has been ignored. Among the numerous doctrines in the Bible, this somewhat obscure doctrine has been more overlooked than controversial, but ironically it has been in public practice throughout the history of Christianity to current times. One can easily find resource materials on any one of the teachings (doctrines, instruction) mentioned in Hebrews 6:1-3 except for the laying on of hands. For the most part, this doctrine is taken for granted. If the laying on of hands is elementary as Scripture declares,

²²⁴ The New American Standard Bible (NASB) version is used throughout this chapter unless otherwise indicated.

why is so little teaching available regarding this ritual and its effects? This is an essential issue that underscores this research.

Including Hebrews 6:2, the word doctrine or teaching (*didachē* in Greek) used in this reference means that which is taught, and is mentioned fifty-six more times in Scripture. The word theology, the study of religious beliefs and theory, is not mentioned once. The difference may be subtle, and for some the distinction may be unimportant, but a working definition may offer insight and clarity. A doctrine could be in any discipline, but often is used in the context of religion. In Christianity, doctrine is biblical content that is taught, whereas theology is a discussion about God in the search for truth, and Scripture is used to defend a theological position. However, whereas biblical doctrines and teachings are factual, they are not isolated snippets of information. Doctrines are also grounded in theological positions aligned with the whole body of Scripture.

Like other religions, Christianity has a plethora of doctrines about many topics found in Scripture. As to theology, students of the Bible have been deliberating theological views for millennia on such topics as the Trinity, salvation, and end times, and their theological persuasions guide and interpret doctrines. Theologians are not necessarily in agreement with each other, but disagreement is not unique to Christianity either. The doctrine of the laying on of hands and the related theological issues within sacramental contexts also present some diversity in interpretation.

A Theology of God as Extravagant Gift-Giver

The beauty and magnificence of the universe declares the Triune God's nature as a giver. For example, in the creation story in the first chapter of Genesis, the Father spoke

and creation appeared. Jesus, the Word, was present in the beginning (John 1:1–5) and through Him all that was created appeared. The Spirit, inseparable from the Godhead, was present in the beginning as “the Spirit of God was moving over the surface of the waters” (Gen. 1:2). Furthermore, the Triune God formed and breathed life into humanity (Gen. 2:7) as the crown of creation, made into the image of God (Gen. 1:27). To the earth, home turf of humanity, God provided all that was necessary for it to flourish and bear bountiful fruit for the survival of humanity. Genesis tells the story of how humankind was given power and dominion to tend and care for the earth, even though wisdom has not always been used in the execution of this power and dominion. All of nature and humanity suffers as a result of the fall and awaits redemption (Rom. 8:20-23).

Because humankind was created in the image of God, transformation occurs as Spirit-filled disciples of Christ follow God’s word and will. The process of hearing and obeying God through the various ways God speaks prompts believers to desire the likeness of God’s character to manifest in themselves. Theologian Clark H. Pinnock describes the transformation as “Spirit-baptized disciples sharing his [Christ’s] risen life.”²²⁵ Paul’s epistle to the Corinthians affirms the gift of the indwelling Spirit for believers. “Now He who establishes us with you in Christ and anointed us is God, who also sealed us and gave us the Spirit in our hearts as a pledge” (1 Cor. 1:21–22). The Father gave His uniquely born Son for the redemption of humanity (John 3:16). The Son gave His life in obedience to the Father on behalf of humanity and baptizes in the Holy Spirit (John 1:33). The Spirit is the Paraclete (Counselor, Comforter, Advocate, Friend)

²²⁵ Clark H. Pinnock, *Flame of Love: A Theology of the Holy Spirit* (Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press, 1996), 114.

who encourages, imparts gifts, guides, and draws humanity to salvation (John 14:26; John 15:26; John 16:7). No greater extravagance can be extended than that of the self-giving of the Triune God.

Because the Triune God is a giver by nature, the new nature of the disciple conformed in the image of Christ (Rom. 8:28–29) and indwelt by the Holy Spirit has the capacity to become an extravagant giver. Roderick T. Leupp, in agreement with Stephen Webb’s “ethics of excess,” states that such an ethic is freeing from the “miserly grasping and misbegotten holding.”²²⁶ Leupp states that the excessive generosity of God is a way of empowering the church to become an agency of likewise giving. Leupp further asserts, “In the end, what God gives is the power of giving itself, the possibility that we can all participate in the movement of giving with the hope that such generosity will be enhanced, organized and consummated in God’s very own becoming.”²²⁷

Pinnock notes that the concept of being a giver extends to the entire Body of Christ. He states, “The church is meant to resemble the triune life by being itself a place of reciprocity and self-giving.”²²⁸ Giving is multiplied when a community of believers acts in unity seeking to meet the spiritual, emotional, and physical needs of the “least of these” (Matt. 25:45). The Body of Christ as a giving body, empowered by the Holy Spirit, begins to look like the One after whom it is modeled.

What kinds of gifts does the Holy Spirit give and to what end? As a giver, God gives good gifts (James 1:17), and all gifts have purpose for the individual as well as the

²²⁶ Roderick T. Leupp, *The Renewal of Trinitarian Theology: Themes, Patterns & Explorations* (Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press, 2008), 195.

²²⁷ Leupp, 196.

²²⁸ Pinnock, *Flame of Love*, 117.

community of believers. Besides the indwelling gift of the Holy Spirit, God's gifts are specifically enumerated in 1 Corinthians 12:8–10 (word of wisdom, word of knowledge, faith, healing, effecting of miracles, prophecy, distinguishing spirits, tongues, interpretations of tongues) and in Romans 12:6–8 (prophecy, service, teaching, exhortation, leading, mercy). Additional ones are mentioned in 1 Corinthians 12:28 (apostles, prophets, teachers, helps, administrations) and Ephesians 4:11 adds evangelists and pastors to the list. Furthermore, 1 Corinthians 12:4–6 implies that God has even more gifts that are not mentioned, which certainly is in keeping with God's nature as an extravagant giver. These gifts are manifestations of the Holy Spirit given for the common good (1 Cor. 12:7) and distributed to individuals according to the will of the Spirit (1 Cor. 12:11).

In God's economy, the Giver (Spirit) gives gifts, and the recipient as the image of God, individually and collectively, becomes the giver and glorifies God, the original Giver. One can envision this as a continuous flow of divine power originating with God, transferred to the receiver through the conduit of the one praying and laying on hands, and glory returned to God, who pours forth more grace and power. The endless supply and diversity of identifiable gifts as well as the giving of self speaks loudly of the Holy Spirit as an extravagant gift-giver who is mindful and compassionate about the well-being of the Church.

For the individual believer, the laying on of hands provides an opportunity to act upon his God-given nature having been made a new creature in Christ and filled with the Holy Spirit. Furthermore, Jesus declares in Mark 16:17 that believers have the authority to join in the Church's mission of imparting healing, liberty, blessing, and deliverance in

the power of the Holy Spirit as Jesus did. Prayer with the laying on of hands is a selfless act whereby faith is exercised on behalf of someone else, and the physical touch becomes the transfer agent of the grace imparted to that person. The priesthood of the believer (Rev. 1:6) informs the person praying that they have the privilege of intercession with the laying on of hands as one of the physical accompanying gestures mentioned in Scripture. In so doing, they join together with the Holy Spirit (Rom. 8:26–27) who is the helper and giver.

Impartation and Transference: The Holy Spirit as Gift-Giver

The context of rituals provokes an essential question about who lays hands on whom to what effect. Laying on of hands carries with it the idea of impartation and transference to bless, assign authority, receive the Holy Spirit and *charismata*, commission works, or ordain ministers. Impartation simply defined is the Holy Spirit giving or communicating something. Transference is the act of moving something from one source to another. The two words appear closely related; however, transfer seems to imply a medium or conduit in the process of moving a thing or idea from a source to the recipient, whereas impartation carries the idea of inputting substance or ideas. In the act of imposing hands for the various reasons, it appears that both impartation and transference takes place. Regardless whether imposition of hands is for imparting a blessing, healing, or charismatic gifts, spiritual substance is communicated (imparted) and moved (transferred) from God as the source, to a recipient through another human medium.

Who is commissioned to lay hands on others is an issue of authority, while consideration of effect is essentially what defines the purpose for the action. For example, Moses had authority to lay hands on Joshua for commissioning and the effect is Joshua's receiving an impartation of the authority and gift to lead the Israelites into the Promised Land. On the one hand, depending on the ecclesiastical structure of the denomination or group, those laying hands on ministerial candidates (typically church leaders) have authority to perform rites of ordination and the effect for the recipient is the receiving of an impartation of spiritual gifts for service. On the other hand, in many circles, particularly those of Pentecostal/Charismatic persuasion, it is believed that all Christians are commissioned to lay on hands for healing, impartation, and blessing by virtue of Jesus' imperative in Mark 16:15–18, and such models as Acts 8:17 and 2 Timothy 1:6.

Belief in impartations when hands are imposed has persisted throughout the ages of Christianity. In the third century, Cyprian wrote about catechumens receiving an impartation when hands were imposed: "Those who are baptized in the church are brought to the prelates of the church. And by our prayers and by the imposition of hands, they obtain the Holy Spirit and are perfected with the Lord's seal."²²⁹ Cyprian noted what was received, the Holy Spirit and the Lord's seal, which seems to be about empowerment and holiness. It must also be noted that the early church acknowledged the possibility of the reception of the Holy Spirit without water baptism or the laying on of hands even though they regularly practiced imposition of hands during rituals of both baptism and ordination. Cyprian makes this clear in his statement,

²²⁹ Cyprian, *Treatise on Re-Baptism* (c. 257), 5.670, quoted in David W. Bercot, ed., *A Dictionary of Early Christian Beliefs* (Peabody, MA: Hendrickson, 1998), 327.

So they received the grace of the promise both without the imposition of the apostle's hands and without the bath, which they attained afterwards [referring to Peter's statement, 'Can any man forbid water, that these should not be baptized, which have received the Holy Ghost as well as we?' Acts 10:47]. Their hearts being purified, God bestowed upon them remission of sins at the same time, in virtue of their faith.²³⁰

Katherine Sonderegger's analysis of Barth's meaning of impartation defines it as an impetus for action in the process of sanctification: "To impart is to communicate, to declare, to announce, to notify; again, to share with, to be contagious, to pass on and to spread."²³¹ Karl Barth's doctrine of sanctification, as described by Sonderegger, includes the notion of impartation, which he calls *die Mitteilung* (literally meaning the communication), not necessarily involving hands.²³² Barth's doctrine of sanctification is summarized by his idea of *die Mitteilung*. Barth states,

We will speak (1) of the impartation (*die Mitteilung*) of the human essence to the divine, and the divine to the human, as it takes place in the one Jesus Christ as Son of God and Son of Man. We will then speak more specifically (2) of what is addressed to the human essence of Jesus Christ in impartation. And finally we will speak (3) of the common actualization (*die gemeinsamen Verwirklichung*) of the divine and human essence as it takes place in Jesus Christ on the basis of this impartation (*KD IV/2, §64.2, 79; CD IV/2, §64.2, 73*).²³³

Die gemeinsamen Verwirklichung, as Barth calls it, is literally a uniting of the Holy Spirit with the human spirit that is wrapped and inseparable, which empowers humanity.

Therefore, as Sonderegger states, impartation carries the "load of the doctrine of

²³⁰ Cyprian, 327.

²³¹ Katherine Sonderegger, "Sanctification as Impartation in the Doctrine of Karl Barth," *Zeitschrift Für Dialektische Theologie* 18, no. 3 (January 1, 2002): 308–15, accessed October 8, 2013, *ATLA Religion Database with ATLASerials*, EBSCOhost, 308.

²³² Sonderegger, 308.

²³³ Karl Barth, as quoted by Katherine Sonderegger, 309.

sanctification.”²³⁴ For Barth, impartation is an “Imperative: Christ commands or directs; he speaks and it is so.”²³⁵ It is the freedom for the sanctified, the freedom to obey.

Furthermore, Barth states that sanctification is “the impartation of Truth. In his Holy Spirit, Christ reveals Himself as Truth, and that Truth sets us free. We are freed to accept, acknowledge and submit to that Truth, to receive that claim, laid upon us, and to respond with our own work, our act of obedience.”²³⁶ Impartation, therefore, is not a frivolous or insignificant matter. The Holy Spirit’s impartation of blessing and gifts are essential and fundamental to Christian life.

Imposition of Hands in Sacramental Contexts: Acts of Giving

The ritual of the laying on of hands is commonly performed in the sacramental contexts of baptism, confirmation (ritual for infilling of the Holy Spirit), and ordination by most traditions with few exceptions. For most in the Eastern Orthodox tradition, the sacrament of confirmation, called chrismation, is typically part of the baptism ritual, whereas in Roman Catholic and some Protestant traditions, confirmation is a separate ritual and event. The laying on of hands is usually part of the liturgical ceremony wherein confirmation is practiced. Depending on the tradition, imposition of hands may be involved in other rituals considered sacramental such as matrimony, forgiveness and absolution of sin, extreme unction, and foot washing to name a few. Regardless of tradition, the intent of the ritual of the laying on of hands is presumed to have efficacy as

²³⁴ Sonderegger, 309.

²³⁵ Sonderegger, 312.

²³⁶ Sonderegger, 314.

a transfer agent in receiving a spiritual impartation of blessing, healing, deliverance, impartation of gifts, or infilling of the Holy Spirit in a sacramental context.

In some Protestant traditions, confirmation is not practiced at all. For Pentecostals and most Charismatics, the baptism of the Holy Spirit is not called confirmation. Rather, it is an event of infilling that is not planned as a ceremony, and that may or may not involve the laying on of hands. This coincides with the Protestant tendency to consider the individual before the collective.

Depending on the theology of the tradition, the participant during water baptism is either initiated into Christianity or giving public affirmation of their decision to be a follower of Christ. Some traditions baptize infants while others do not. The belief for infant baptism is that parents agree to nurture the child in the knowledge of God, the child becomes part of the church through the vicarious faith of the parents, and confirmation empowers the child to live a Christ-life when the child is older. Those who do not subscribe to infant baptism but subscribe to an infant-related ceremony present the infant before the church in a ceremony of dedication. The parents commit themselves to nurturing the child in Christian beliefs in the hopes that as the child grows to an age of accountability, the child will make a personal decision to follow Christ. These children later choose baptism as an outward sign of an inward commitment to Christ when they are old enough to understand the sacrament of baptism. Through the use of water and imposition of hands as the transfer agent, it is believed that the participant receives blessing and empowerment to live a life in Christ either directly or vicariously through the parents' agreement, depending on the theological tradition.

In the Roman Catholic tradition, the sacrament of confirmation is for the impartation of the Holy Spirit where hands are imposed, typically by a bishop, and the participants are presumed to have received the Holy Spirit in the ceremony. For Pentecostals, the baptism in the Holy Spirit is purely a personal event and may occur prior to baptism, at the same time as baptism, or subsequent to baptism. This baptism of the Holy Spirit is often imparted through prayer accompanied by the laying on of hands by either clergy or laity, but imposition of hands is not required. Because of its personal nature, the experience can be a solitary event in any location without anyone else involved. When the laying on of hands is involved in any Christian tradition, the hands act as a transfer agent for blessing and impartation.

Ordination of ministers as a sacerdotal function is common to most Christian traditions, and it is believed that the individual receives the empowerment for service through prayer and the imposition of hands, sometimes accompanied by prophetic utterance. Traditionally, an anchor text for ordination is, “Do not neglect the spiritual gift within you, which was bestowed upon you through prophetic utterance with the laying on of hands by the presbytery” (1 Tim. 4:14, NASB). John E. Toews agrees that the “gift” in the textual reference is a *charisma* and it is associated with prophecy, but suggests that it may not have been an ordination. “Timothy’s gift involved a charismatic communication and community affirmation; the Spirit communicated something and the church responded affirmatively.”²³⁷ Since no definitive statement that 1 Timothy 4:14 is specifically a commissioning or an ordination, interpretation about the context of this

²³⁷ John E. Toews, “Rethinking the Meaning of Ordination: Toward a Biblical Theology of Leadership Affirmation,” *Conrad Grebel Review* 22, no. 1 (December 1, 2004): 5–25, accessed September 30, 2013, *ATLA Religion Database with ATLASerials*, EBSCOhost, 9.

impartation remains open. Nevertheless, using this as an anchor text for ordination appears to be legitimate since it is addressed to a church leader having a *charism* imparted for service.

Paul's instruction, according to 1 Timothy 4:18, consists of three elements: the giving of Timothy's *charism* (gift) presumably by the Spirit (1 Cor. 12:4–7, 11), prophecy, and the laying on of hands by the presbytery also referenced in 2 Timothy 1:6. This commissioning is reminiscent of Paul and Barnabas being commissioned in Acts 13:2, 3, and Acts 14:23. The *charism* seems to be a permanent gift that can be either neglected (1 Tim. 4:14) or rekindled (2 Tim. 1:6). The laying on of hands by the presbytery gives the event a certain formality as a structured event, perhaps a precursor to the concept of ordination for the impartation of the *charism* or “gift of grace.” Apparently, the *charism* not exercised will wither, which accounts for Timothy being charged to progress in these things. The concept of diminishing effects of gifts from lack of use was also a popular Stoic philosophy and expressed by Paul in Philippians 1:24–25.²³⁸ In addition, according to James D. G. Dunn, 2 Timothy 1:6 has a friendlier tone and in this second reference, only Paul's laying on of hands is mentioned, indicating the importance of the event being greater than who participated in it.²³⁹

The importance of imparting and transferring *charisms* in the life of the Church should not be understated. Denis Edwards states that the Western church tends to favor the Word over the Spirit. He points out that while *charisms* are important to the church's

²³⁸ James D. G. Dunn, “The First and Second Letters to Timothy and the Letter to Titus: Introduction, Commentary, and Reflections,” vol. 11, in *The New Interpreter's Bible: A Commentary in Twelve Volumes*, ed. Leander E. Keck (Nashville, TN: Abingdon Press, 1996), 814.

²³⁹ Dunn, 833.

mission, “both the *charisms* and in the structural means of grace, Word and Spirit act together.”²⁴⁰ The Spirit works in the pastoral leadership of the church, “keeps the church apostolic,” serves as the “principle of holiness in the church,” and is “always simultaneously a theology of the human being before God (anthropology) and a theology of church (ecclesiology).”²⁴¹

Another sacramental context for the laying on of hands is extreme unction (prayer for the sick near death) for Catholics. Furthermore, healing for many traditions, both Protestant and Eastern Orthodox, is an enormous topic for which tomes have been written. Basically, the intent of praying for the sick, often with imposition of hands and/or anointing with oil according to James 5:14 is to bring about the healing process. The role of faith in healing, both to impart and to receive, while critical to the process, has been argued from differing theological positions. Whose faith is being exercised? Is it the one praying, the one who is sick, or both? Whereas these questions are worthy of investigation, they are beyond the scope of this investigation. The focus here is on the fact that believers are commissioned to lay hands on the sick with the expectation of

²⁴⁰ Denis Edwards, *Breath of Life: A Theology of the Creator Spirit* (Maryknoll, NY: Orbis Books, 2004), 93. Edwards summarizes the relationship between the church and the Holy Spirit on page 101 as follows:

1. The church is not ready-made. It is always in the process of being built by the Spirit.
2. The church receives the fullness of the Spirit only by receiving the totality of the gifts of all the members of the church.
3. They are constitutive and foundational for the church. They give rise to a variety of ministries in the church. The ordained ministry has its place among the *charisms* of the Spirit and has a role in the ordering of the *charisms*.
4. The church is to be understood in Trinitarian terms as a community of the faithful in whom the Spirit dwells, rather than as a hierarchical monopoly that dispenses gifts from above.
5. While the church holds to what is already given in the Christ event, the Spirit draws us into the new, into the openness of God's future. The Spirit thus appears as “God-before-us,” the God of the future, the one who makes all things new.

²⁴¹ Edwards, 95.

recovery, and that the impartation of healing during which the hands, and possibly oil, act as transfer agents for healing virtue to flow from God to the sick person. In this sense, healing is a divine gift given to the sick through an empowered believer.

Besides blessing the individual, God has invested life and gifts to the church as a community of believers. Pinnock states, “Spirit indwells the church as a perpetual Pentecost and communicates gifts to its members.”²⁴² The Spirit empowers the church so that it has the capacity to carry out the mission in the manner that Jesus did. “Like Jesus, the church must live not out of its own resources but by the power of the indwelling Spirit, which breathes, strengthens, inspires and guides.”²⁴³

This notion of the whole body participating in the blessings of impartation also applies to the ritual of the laying on of hands in public rituals. For example, in a public context such as baptism/confirmation (chrismation) or ordination, the laying on of hands communicates something of importance to the witnesses present as well as the direct recipients. The community of believers is brought into the experience by the act of agreement in prayer. The recipient is affirmed in the context of the ritual and all who are present are welcome to share in the faith for the efficacy of the ritual and the impartation of blessings or *charismata*. The laying on of hands in a vicarious sense unites the community of believers in a holistic blessing so that, as Aristotle would say, the whole is greater than the sum of its parts. The same bond of love that is between the Father and Jesus is the bond of love among the members of the church and between the church and the Triune God.

²⁴² Pinnock, *Flame of Love*, 114.

²⁴³ Pinnock, *Flame of Love*, 115.

Imposition of Hands in Post-Enlightenment Pentecostal/Charismatic Thought

Three principle areas where laying on of hands are imposed in Pentecostal practices are in healing the sick, impartation of the Holy Spirit, and practices of commissioning.²⁴⁴ The Pentecostal Movement focuses on the individual's experiences in receiving *charismata* often accompanied by impartation of hands in the manner of the primitive church and Christian mystics of the past.²⁴⁵ In terms of healing, impartation is not limited to imposition of hands. One can pronounce healing in Jesus' Name, however, according to Williams, the "value of personal contact through hands is strongly emphasized."²⁴⁶ In the Pentecostal tradition, the impartation of the Holy Spirit is based on biblical examples in Acts 8:17, Acts 9:17, and Acts 19:6. Williams explains, "In these accounts, receiving, being filled with, and coming on refer essentially to the same activity—the impartation of the Spirit. The laying on of hands was done in immediate conjunction with all three,"²⁴⁷ and, consequently, forms the basis of the practice and belief in its efficacy as a transfer agent in the impartation.

Pentecostalism emphasizes the person and work of the Holy Spirit and the importance of the baptism in the Holy Spirit for all believers. According to classical Pentecostal beliefs, the baptism in the Holy Spirit is considered a distinct experience from conversion with the initial evidence being glossolalia, and may or may not be subsequent

²⁴⁴ J.F. Williams, "Laying on of Hands," in *The New International Dictionary of Pentecostal Charismatic Movements*, rev. and expanded ed., ed. Stanley M. Burgess and Edward M. van der Maas (Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan, 2002), 834.

²⁴⁵ D. William Faupel, "The Function of 'Models' in the Interpretation of Pentecostal Thought," *Pneuma* 2, no. 1 (October 1, 1980): 51–7, accessed August 30, 2013, *ATLA Religion Database with ATLASerials*, EBSCOhost, 59.

²⁴⁶ Williams, 834.

²⁴⁷ Williams, 834.

to water baptism. According to W. David Buschart, “The baptism in the Spirit is not merely to be tolerated or even allowed for; rather, it is to be desired, sought after and prayed for, as it is an essential part of God’s equipping of the church for the ministries that God has given to the church.”²⁴⁸ The emphasis here extends beyond impartation for personal spirituality but as necessary for service. Empowerment for ministry is accompanied with gifts of the Holy Spirit and thus “will always be the principal means through which God builds the church.”²⁴⁹

In the mid-twentieth century, the New Order of the Latter Rain Movement (often shortened to the Latter Rain Movement) focused heavily on laying on of hands as the method for receiving the baptism of the Holy Spirit as opposed to earlier Pentecostals who followed the Holiness tradition of “tarrying” (lingering or waiting for the Holy Spirit). Latter Rain had enormous impact on existing Pentecostal denominations and the subsequent Charismatic Movement in terms of the shift of belief from tarrying to the laying on of hands for more immediacy of impartation. Ralph M. Riggs, an Assemblies of God administrator involved in the early years of its formation as a denomination, articulates a theology of the supernatural work of the Holy Spirit and acknowledges that waiting on the Lord in prayer is always a good thing, however, it is not required to “tarry” for the baptism in the Holy Spirit. “The Holy Spirit is a gracious, glorious, God-sent Gift, and we receive Him by faith and by faith alone.”²⁵⁰ He further states, “When these awaiting new disciples [referring to the Samaritans in Acts 8] were thus prayed for

²⁴⁸ Buschart, 247.

²⁴⁹ Buschart, 250.

²⁵⁰ Ralph M. Riggs, *The Spirit Himself* (Springfield, MO: Gospel Publishing House, 1949), 106.

and instructed, the apostles laid hands on them (as an aid to the seeker's faith) and they received the Holy Ghost."²⁵¹

Early in the Pentecostal Movement, the shared experience of those who were already Christian and then subsequently encountered the Pentecostal experience is a critical component of Pentecostal tradition that carried into the second wave in the mid-twentieth century. "Indeed, it was shared experience which led to the key elements of the Pentecostal doctrine. Most Pentecostals were Christian prior to receiving the baptism in the Spirit with the evidence of tongues, and this led to the conclusion that the event was distinct from and subsequent to salvation."²⁵² This belief originates and aligns with the Methodist and Holiness Movement "second blessing" doctrine of sanctification. Many of the early Pentecostals who joined their movement were originally from these two groups, some adding on a "third blessing" they identified as the baptism of the Holy Spirit.

Later in the twentieth century, the Charismatic Movement of the 1960s and onward continued the legacy of the laying on of hands initiated by the Latter Rain Movement, but differed in their perspective as to the evidence of the baptism of the Holy Spirit. Charismatics' understanding of the experience is not specifically tied to the evidence of speaking in tongues. According to Charismatics, tongues is only one of many gifts that the Spirit chooses to impart. The Charismatic position on the evidence of the baptism of the Holy Spirit continues into the Third Wave Movement beginning in the late twentieth century, sometimes called the Neo-Charismatic Movement. The Third Wave

²⁵¹ Riggs, *The Spirit Himself*, 109.

²⁵² Shane Clifton, "The Spirit and Doctrinal Development: A Functional Analysis of the Traditional Pentecostal Doctrine of the Baptism of the Holy Spirit," *Pneuma* 29, no. 1 (January 1, 2007): 5–23, 13.

does not insist on glossolalia as evidence of the baptism of the Holy Spirit, but regularly practices the laying on of hands and focuses heavily on impartation of blessing and *charismata*. Third Wave fully accepts glossolalia and many do speak in tongues, but it is not demanded as evidence of infilling of the Holy Spirit. As evidence of the baptism of the Holy Spirit, Third Wave and Charismatic believers stress a fruitful life and believe that any of the gifts of the Spirit can be imparted.

Concurrent with the Charismatic movement, the Word of Faith Movement (characterized by speaking Scripture as confessions of faith) gained momentum during the latter years of the twentieth century. Kenneth E. Hagin, a central leader of the movement and founder of Rhema Bible Training Center (now Rhema Bible Training College), articulated a theology of impartation through the laying on of hands for a large number of followers. Hagin acknowledged the laying on of hands as a fundamental doctrine according to Hebrews 6:2 in his writings.

In explaining the fundamental doctrine from his perspective, Hagin asserts that imposition of hands is for ordination, and also used in the impartation of the baptism in the Holy Spirit as evidenced in Acts 8:17 and Acts 19:6.²⁵³ Furthermore, Hagin concludes that “When the person who has a ministry of laying on of hands on the sick in obedience to the spiritual Law of Contact and Transmission [named by Hagin to describe impartation and transference], his hands transmit God’s healing power into the body of the sick person, effecting a healing and a cure.”²⁵⁴ Hagin claimed that a distinct ministry of the laying on of hands exists, and that it is a special anointing, but he did not give

²⁵³ Kenneth E. Hagin, *Laying on of Hands* (Tulsa, OK: Kenneth Hagin Ministries, 1981), 7–8.

²⁵⁴ Hagin, 30.

adequate exegetical analysis of Scripture to support this claim. Nevertheless, Hagin's position on the efficacy of imposition of hands as a transfer agent for impartation has merit.

Throughout the twentieth century, impartation and transference was not without controversy, particularly from those who subscribe to cessationism, the belief that the miraculous gifts of the Holy Spirit ceased to exist upon the death of the first apostles, a position advocated by the reformer John Calvin in the sixteenth century. If one believes that the miraculous and *charismata* are no longer in effect, the practice of laying on of hands has little to no purpose other than public affirmation, and consequently has no efficacy of impartation.

Essentially, Calvin's position is two-fold. Miracles of healing are no longer needed because the original intent to spread Christianity by the means of miracles had already been established by the first apostles, and therefore, no longer necessary. Furthermore, healing the soul is the central issue of Christianity. Historically, Calvin's work is a sixteenth century response to the centuries of ecclesiastical excesses and corruption, medieval syncretism with pagan practices, and reliquary belief, all of which Calvin rejected. According to Calvin, the rituals in the mass, pilgrimages, adoration of saints, statues, relics, and shrines, detracted from the glory of God. Calvin viewed these as superstition and idolatry.²⁵⁵ Furthermore, Calvin viewed sickness as a tool of God to

²⁵⁵ Pavel Hejzlar, "John Calvin and the Cessation of Miraculous Healing," *Communio Viatorum* 49, no. 1 (January 1, 2007): 31–77, accessed October 17, 2013, *ATLA Religion Database with ATLASerials*, EBSCOhost, 33.

either punish the wicked in order to lead them to repentance, as originating with the original sin of Adam, or as a tool to test the loyalty and patience of a believer.²⁵⁶

If this cessationist point of view is indeed correct, then the laying on of hands for healing is not only ineffective, but if the sickness is God's leading, punishment or testing, the interference of prayer for healing violates God's will. This line of thinking has serious implications and potentially contradicts the imperative to pray for the sick in James 5:14 and other passages about praying for the sick. Cessationism, therefore, moved from convictions about the denouncement of corruption and superfluous practices to a denial of legitimate miracles and the demonstration of the power endowed by the Holy Spirit.

Calvin's position also influenced Protestantism as it interprets sacraments. The laying on of hands as a ritual is commonly seen in the context of sacraments in Catholic and Eastern Orthodox traditions. For Calvin, only God institutes a sacrament because it is a ceremony appointed by God having a promise attached to it. Only two sacraments fit this definition, baptism and communion. Following the teaching of Augustine, Calvin also claimed that extreme unction (anointing the sick) along with penance, holy orders (ordination), marriage, and confirmation are novelties (*Institutes* 4:19:3), not sacraments.

Luther, although an earlier reformer who could be considered a contemporary and an influence on Calvin, also rejected the validity of these additional Roman Catholic sacraments. Nevertheless, Luther did acknowledge that the prayer of faith might affect healing, and that the faith of the elders were involved in the healing.²⁵⁷ For Luther, the laying on of hands for healing at least has the possibility of efficacy. Pavel Hejzlar

²⁵⁶ Hejzlar, 33.

²⁵⁷ Hejzlar, 35.

concludes, “While Calvin fully acknowledges the historical reality of the New Testament miracles, he maintains that their purpose of certifying the gospel at the time of its initial entry into the world and adorning the church at its birth has been accomplished once for all.”²⁵⁸ He further states, “Consequently, we are left with a picture of a stern deity who punishes on the physical level but saves on the spiritual plane.”²⁵⁹

More recently and along the same line of thinking as John Calvin and Princeton theologian Benjamin B. Warfield (1855–1921), F. R. Harms, a cessationist, contends that while the traditional interpretation of imposition of hands subsequent to conversion by someone who is a counterpart of the apostles serves as a paradigm, Scripture does not support this interpretation.²⁶⁰ He also claims that the gift of tongues was given as a strategy to gain attention for Christianity, and to empower recipients to be a witness as missionaries to the nations. Furthermore, Harm states that the purpose for the gift of the Spirit upon the Samaritans was to unite them with Jews into one church.²⁶¹

In the case of the Gentile church, Peter goes to Cornelius’ house after his vision and as he speaks, the Spirit of God falls on the Cornelius’ household in a sovereign move of God. Much later in Ephesus, Paul encounters new believers, lays hands upon them and they receive the Holy Spirit. As in the case of the Jews and Samaritans, Harm indicates that the reason for the repetition of this pattern was to emphasize that with God,

²⁵⁸ Hejzlar, 73.

²⁵⁹ Hejzlar, 74.

²⁶⁰ F. R. Harm, "Structural Elements Related to the Gift of the Holy Spirit in Acts," *Concordia Journal* 14, no. 1 (1988): 28–41, accessed September 22, 2013, *New Testament Abstracts*, EBSCOhost, 30.

²⁶¹ Harm, 32.

distinction between Jew and Gentile no longer exists: “There is no distinction between the two: the two have become one body in Christ.”²⁶²

Harm clearly does not see the impartation of the gift of the Holy Spirit as an experience for all believers subsequent to Pentecost. He states that the book of Acts is a merely a history of the early church and that it is only a witness of what the Spirit began in forming the church. Harm states, “No part of it [Acts] can be disassociated from the whole and made a paradigm of God’s activity in contemporary situation.”²⁶³ Again, this argument devalues the role of imposition of hands to empty ritual having no purpose or efficacy, and the book of Acts to no more significance than being a piece of quality literature and historical text. If Spirit-endowed gifts are no longer available to the Church, as cessationists claim, then the imperative to receive them is illogical and pointless.

Continuationism, on the other hand, opposes this cessationist view. Besides the biblical imperatives of such Scripture as Mark 16:15–18, the well-documented occurrences of signs, wonders, and miracles into contemporary times challenges and refutes cessationist doctrines. Jon Mark Ruthven’s current definitive study on continuationism thoroughly refutes the claims of cessationism on biblical grounds as well the historical record throughout the eras of Christianity. Ruthven states that cessationism contradicts 1 Corinthians 12 in that in order for the Body of Christ to function effectively and to its capacity, all of the gifts of the Spirit must be allowed to function.²⁶⁴

²⁶² Harm, 37.

²⁶³ Harm, 39.

²⁶⁴ Jon Mark Ruthven, *On the Cessation of the Charismata: the Protestant Polemic on Post-Biblical Miracle*, rev. and expanded ed. (Tulsa, OK: Word & Spirit Press, 2011), 184–86. Ruthven states that much of the dispute over the spiritual gifts is due to “evidentialism,” meaning that spiritual gifts are

Cessationism, according to Ruthven, clings to a post-Reformation and Enlightenment worldview about “miracles-as-evidence” and its failure to understand the eschatological role of the Spirit of prophecy, which “are bestowed until the end of this age as manifestations of the advancing Kingdom of God.”²⁶⁵ Ruthven’s comment on receiving *charismata* is also poignant. “It is supremely ironic that this central and crucial denial of the prophetic revelation of the Spirit is in the service of ‘protecting’ the canon of Scripture, when Scripture itself commands us ‘to desire earnestly the best gifts—especially that you may prophesy’! (1 Cor. 14:1).”²⁶⁶ It appears that the most basic powers of reason affirm that the gifts of the Spirit are still available to believers and fully operate within the Body of Christ in building the Kingdom of God.

Laying on of Hands in Third Wave (Neo-Charismatic) Christian Context

The current trend in many Third Wave charismatic churches and conferences is to conduct an “impartation prayer” time with much laying on of hands by both clergy and laity alike. The expectation is that when hands are imposed along with prayer, the Holy Spirit will impart a blessing, healing, empowerment, and/or charismatic gifts. With some exception, the emphasis for the most part is no longer on the special “anointed” minister laying hands on those seeking blessing or impartation. Certainly, clergy still lead services and invite participation of congregants, but having a more inclusive and egalitarian

intended for service, not proof of spirituality. He makes the point that it is God’s pleasure to give gifts. Therefore, it should be received with humility and be used to function in the church.

²⁶⁵ Jon Mark Ruthven, *On the Cessation of the Charismata*, 170.

²⁶⁶ Jon Mark Ruthven, *What’s Wrong with Protestant Theology? Tradition vs. Biblical Emphasis* (Tulsa, OK: Word & Spirit Press, 2013), 196.

attitude, the emphasis is receiving from the Spirit through prayer and impartation of hands by the believing “whosoever” (ordinary disciples of Christ).

Among the various streams within the Third Wave, the International House of Prayer (IHOP, started as the Kansas City Fellowship) founded by Mike Bickle, appears to have an emphasis on the gift of prophecy received through impartations. David Pythches’ conducted early interviews of the Kansas City prophets, a group associated with Mike Bickle in the late 1900s. When Pythches asked this prophetic group how others might receive this gift,

They said that such a person would need to make a commitment to getting and really wanting it (1 Cor. 14:1); to pray for it and to work with others who had it. It was also possible for someone who had the gift to impart it (Rom 1:11, 1 Tim. 4:14; 2 Tim. 1:6); but Paul’s injunction to “lay hands suddenly on no one” would apply here [referring to 1 Tim. 5:22]. Where the gift had been ignored or unused for some time (as was probably the case with Timothy), it needed to be “stirred up” again.²⁶⁷

Kansas City prophets obviously interpret 1 Timothy 5:22 as warning to refrain from the laying on of hands for commissioning or impartation without discernment. However, others interpret 1 Timothy 5:22 as a warning to be mindful about wrongfully and hastily indicting elders of wrongdoings, which seems more in line with the context of the verse.

The prophetic interviewees discuss the transfer of the prophetic gift using Paul’s statement about imparting spiritual gifts to the Romans as the anchor text. They state,

Prophecy, it seems, may be a natural talent for those who have been born with it (Rom. 12:6-8), but always to be exercised properly in God’s service it must be “in proportion to our faith.” It is also seen in Scripture as a spiritual gift (1 Cor. 12:10), conveyed through the anointing of the Holy Spirit, and to be used for the common good. Finally, it seems that prophecy may also be imparted by another person who also has the same anointing (Rom. 1:11).²⁶⁸

²⁶⁷ David Pythches, *Some Said It Thundered* (Nashville, TN: Thomas Nelson, 1991), 112.

²⁶⁸ Pythches, 113.

This statement implies that if someone is desirous of the gift of prophecy, it is helpful to be around prophets and receive impartations from them. However, even though not directly stated, the danger of emphasizing the gifted individual as the source of impartation may give the impression that the person is the source of the gift instead of the Holy Spirit.

It must be noted that in Romans 1:11, Paul does state, “I may impart some spiritual gift to you,” but it does not imply that a person’s specific gift can be imparted by that person to someone else, nor does it identify the gift or Paul as the source of the gift. It simply states that Paul would impart a spiritual gift, and that it has the general purpose of blessing others, including him, as indicated by verse 12. Thus, the implication is that Paul is used as a vessel (a transfer agent) to impart spiritual gifts, but the gifts do not originate with him. Rather, the gifts originate with the giver of gifts, the Holy Spirit. Therefore, the statement of the Kansas City prophets lacks clarity in interpreting Romans 1:11 as applied to their notion of transfer of anointing/gifts. The gifts that are transferred by the laying on of hands could be the same or different from that of the person used in the transfer since the originator is the Holy Spirit, not the person.

To seek a specific gift solely by virtue of receiving an impartation by a person having that gift, and expecting that specific gift to be imparted, is a theology of impartation on shaky ground. The gift originates from the Holy Spirit according to the Spirit’s will (1 Cor. 12:11). Moses laid hands on Joshua for his commissioning as the next leader of Israel, and Elisha received a similar gift as his mentor Elijah in prophetic ministry, but although having some similarities in a general sense, neither the ministry of Joshua, nor that of Elisha, were identical to their mentors. The empowerment they

received was unique to their lives and the people they blessed. Seeking an anointed vessel to pray for an impartation of whatever God chooses to impart seems more in line with respecting the sovereignty of the Holy Spirit while at the same time honoring God's anointed servants. God's plans and purposes for each individual are personalized just as each individual is uniquely created.

In a practical context, Bill Johnson, founder of Bethel Church in Redding, California, and a Third Wave Movement leader in the forefront of the movement, also discusses impartation of *charismata* through the laying on of hands. Johnson makes a specific point about the source of the grace and gift being from God. In that vein, he states, "The time spent receiving prayer has become a tool God has used to fill His people with more of Himself. It has become a method for this wonderful time of impartation."²⁶⁹ He advises adherents to "Pursue the men and women of God who live a miracle lifestyle and ask them to lay hands on you and pray. You can obtain a grace for miracles in this way."²⁷⁰ Johnson states very clearly that one may obtain a grace, not demand a specific grace, with prayer and the laying on of hands. He also makes a point in his writings that the laying on of hands is not the only method to receive an impartation of blessing, empowerment, *charismata*, or healing. These instructions to the thousands of adherents to the Third Wave Movement appear to have greater theological merit than that of the Kansas City group, and provide sound practical advice to prevent extra-biblical excesses.

²⁶⁹ Bill Johnson, *When Heaven Invades Earth: A Practical Guide to a Life of Miracles* (Shippensburg, PA: Destiny Image, 2003), 72–73.

²⁷⁰ Bill Johnson and Randy Clark, *The Essential Guide to Healing: Equipping All Christians to Pray for the Sick* (Minneapolis, MN: Baker, 2011), 151.

Global Awakening, an apostolic ministry founded by Randy Clark, emphasizes healing and impartation, and embraces Bill Johnson's position. Both hold the position that the laying on of hands may not be required to receive from the Holy Spirit, but remains a viable method that has sound biblical imperatives and foundations. Furthermore, Clark emphasizes that imposition of hands has a long historical legacy in the Church, and he best sums the timeless importance of the doctrine of the laying on of hands in the following quote: "Perhaps one of the reasons impartation has become the most forgotten and most neglected 'elementary teaching' of the New Testament Church is because, through prophecy and the laying on of hands, God is in the driver's seat, so to speak, of the local church and the Church at large."²⁷¹

Laying on of Hands in Non-Christian Healing Contexts

Current trends in the world of alternative medicine include the imposition of hands for impartation of healing. It is not within the scope or intent of this chapter to present in-depth investigation of alternative medicine techniques, the theology of New Age and Eastern religious thought, or the use and effects of touch outside of biblically grounded contexts. However, the brief inclusion of Holistic Health and New Age hands-on healing systems that have been gaining popularity since the 1970s²⁷² is worth

²⁷¹ Clark, *There is More!*, 206.

²⁷² Wouter J. Hanegraaff, *New Age Religion and Western Culture: Esotericism in the Mirror of Secular Thought* (Albany, NY: State University of New York, 1988), 53–55.

mentioning in light of the increase and wider acceptance of these systems in medical facilities, and possible syncretism with Christian thought.²⁷³

Furthermore, given the incorporation of these systems by medical facilities and insurance company coverage, clients may engage in these practices without full knowledge of their origins or spiritual effects, and might assume them to be Christian. While not the only alternative that claims hands-on healing, Reiki and Therapeutic Touch are two well-known spiritual systems that are exemplars of the alternative medicine trend outside of the scope of Christianity. It is important to note here that even though used by medical facilities, no claims of healing by the medical community are forthcoming. Medical scientific evidence for the effectiveness of Reiki is much like that of Therapeutic Touch in that neither one shows promise for healing.²⁷⁴ At best, the claim is to provide relaxation, reduced stress, and decreased anxiety, which might in and of themselves promote the natural tendency for the body to heal itself.²⁷⁵

²⁷³ Randy Clark and Sue Thompson, *Healing Energy: Whose Is It?* (Mechanicsburg, PA: Global Awakening, 2013), 59–60.

²⁷⁴ American Cancer Society, “Reiki,” *American Cancer Society*, (last revision March 8, 2012), accessed December 28, 2013, <http://www.cancer.org/treatment/treatmentsandsideeffects/complementaryandalternativemedicine/manualhealingandphysicaltouch/reiki>. The American Cancer Society’s official website offers the following information on Reiki. “Many studies of Reiki have been conducted without using rigorous scientific methods, so quality information is scarce. For instance, studies that do not use a placebo group (using sham Reiki and identical conditions) are more likely to show symptom improvement shortly after treatment. But studies without placebo control leave open the possibility that the outcome is produced by mental and physical factors other than Reiki. Available scientific evidence at this time does not support claims that Reiki can help treat cancer or any other illness. More study may help determine to what extent, if at all, it can improve a patient’s sense of well-being.”

²⁷⁵ NYU Langone Medical Center, “Therapeutic Touch,” *NYU Langone Medical Center*, EBSCO Publishing, 2013, accessed December 28, 2013, <http://www.med.nyu.edu/content?ChunkIID=37411>. The NYU Langone Medical Center site specifically states, “There are no uses of Therapeutic Touch [TT] with any meaningful scientific support.” The site provides data on several studies that have been done regarding Therapeutic Touch including its claims of “energy fields.” The site states, “Studies provide preliminary evidence that TT does not work in the manner that practitioners believe it does. . . . Furthermore, if TT actually involves contact with the “energy field” of a patient, it would seem that the practitioners would be able to sense the presence of such a field. However, in a widely publicized study, 21 practitioners who had

The theological issues that these systems present are twofold—the source of any exhibited power, and the effects of the experience including any potential spiritual harm due to spiritual activity other than that of the Holy Spirit. Both Reiki and Therapeutic Touch systems employ the laying on of hands with meditations on the part of the technician, and base their practice on spiritual concepts. They have gained acceptance within some in the medical community with the intent of doing good. As Randy Clark states, “They are good people, people who are aware of the spiritual side of life, people who are motivated by compassion to alleviate the suffering of others, and who do not believe in scientific reductionism that is void of the life of the spirit.”²⁷⁶ Nevertheless, awareness of spirituality does not automatically produce spiritual discernment.

Reiki

According to The International Training Center for Reiki Training’s official website, the method is not taught to the technician, but rather spiritually transferred from a master to the student in a process called “attunement,” which “allows the student to tap into an unlimited supply of ‘life force energy’ to improve one's health and enhance the quality of life.”²⁷⁷ The site claims that Reiki is spiritual, not religious. Although it follows

practiced TT for 1 to 27 years proved unable to do this.” As 1993 “reasonably well-designed study” showed the “use of TT in 108 people undergoing surgery failed to reduce post-operative pain to a greater extent than sham Therapeutic Touch.” The best that the medical site has to say about TT is that “Nonetheless, the studies already performed do indicate that, at the very least, concentrated, positive attention provided by one human being to another is consoling and calming.” Obviously, others who have no involvement with TT or any other forms of touch therapy have the capacity to provide the kind of attention that produces the reduction of anxiety. A pet can also provide that kind of soothing relief.

²⁷⁶ Clark and Thompson, 25–26.

²⁷⁷ The International Center for Reiki Training, “What is Reiki?” *The International Center for Reiki Training*, accessed December 17, 2013, <http://www.Reiki.org/faq/whatisReiki.html>.

Eastern religious thought, Reiki claims to not subscribe to a specific religion. It further states that Mikao Usui, founder of Reiki, based the principles of Reiki on the values of the emperor during the Japanese Meiji period (1868–1912).²⁷⁸ Mikao Usui laid the foundation of Reiki with the following transliterated and translated guidelines from the original Japanese.

*Shoufuku no hihoo^[SEP] Manbyo no ley-yaku^[SEP] Kyo dake wa^[SEP] Okolu-na^[SEP] Shinpai
suna^[SEP] Kansa shite^[SEP] Goo hage me^[SEP] Hito ni shinsetsu ni^[SEP] Asa yuu gassho shite
kokoro ni neji kuchi ni tonaeyo^[SEP] Shin shin kaizen, Usui Reiki Ryoho^[SEP] Chosso
Usui Mikao*

The secret art of inviting happiness

The miraculous medicine of all diseases

Just for today, do not anger.

Do not worry and be filled with gratitude.

Devote yourself to your work.

Be kind to people.

Every morning and evening, join your hands in prayer.

Pray these words to your heart and chant these words with your mouth.

Usui Reiki Treatment for the improvement of body and mind

The founder, Usui Mikao²⁷⁹

These words of the founder Usui Mikao are the meditative foundations of the system for the technician as well as the recipient. It is worth noting that whereas kindness, gratitude, and freedom from anger are admirable qualities and would have little argument from the Christian world, none of them invoke the power of the Holy Spirit and the power of God for healing.

According to the official website, recipients are responsible for their healing. It claims that these guidelines “help people realize that healing the spirit by consciously deciding to improve oneself is a necessary part of the Reiki healing experience,” and that

²⁷⁸ The International Center for Reiki Training, “What is Reiki?”

²⁷⁹ The International Center for Reiki Training, “What is Reiki?”

“the client must accept responsibility for her or his healing and take an active part in it.”²⁸⁰ This relieves the technician of any responsibility or commitment for the healing claims of Reiki, and makes it suspect for the cynical, a snare for the gullible, and convenient for charlatans. In addition, it lays the weight of the cause and relief of disease and illness on the person seeking help, while at the same time exonerating the accountability of the technician.

Whereas both Christian healing and Reiki employ the laying on of hands, the theological underpinnings have glaring differences. Christian healing completely relies on the power of the Holy Spirit and prayer using the authority of the Name of Jesus. In contrast, Reiki claims power of a “life force energy” through human agency and requires agreement between technician and client. Reiki technicians summon the energy and presumably transfer it to the client. By contrast, the laying on of hands for Christians follows the injunction of Mark 16:18 and the pattern set forth by the ministry of Jesus and the subsequent ministry of the disciples as described in the New Testament. Suffice it to say that participating in Reiki presents the potential for the same outcomes and consequences as Eastern religions and New Age participation.

Therapeutic Touch

Therapeutic Touch as a system of hands-on healing originated at the Theosophical spiritual retreat center of Pumpkin Hollow in New York and was developed by Dora Kunz and Dolores Krieger, followers of Theosophical thought. The official site for Therapeutic Touch makes no apologies about its connections to the Theosophy Society,

²⁸⁰ The International Center for Reiki Training, “What is Reiki?”

founded by Helena Blavatsky in the nineteenth century.²⁸¹ Blavatsky's definition of theosophy resembles idolatry rather than the Judeo-Christian understanding of God.²⁸²

Contrary to the beliefs of theosophy, the Christian God of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob is not a collection of gods created in the image of humanity, nor does the Christian concept of God's divinity embrace the idea that all chief gods are the same or equivalent. Theosophy prides itself as being a philosophy that is inclusive of all concepts of divinity for all peoples and all ages, very much in the manner of New Age advocates. This stance becomes problematic and unsustainable when searching for truth in religious systems at odds with each other.

The official Therapeutic Touch site claims that Theosophy is not a religion and that it embraces Christianity, yet it espouses religious concepts that directly contradict key tenets of Christianity. For example, theosophy states that the "Eastern idea of karma is evident in the Bible," and that reincarnation "is implicit as an underlying assumption."²⁸³ Nothing could be farther from the truth. Scripture neither supports karma nor reincarnation. Karma, a foundation Hindu doctrine of cause and effect, places

²⁸¹ Pumpkin Hollow Foundation, "History of Therapeutic Touch at Pumpkin Hollow Retreat Center," *Therapeutic Touch*, accessed December 17, 2013, http://www.therapeutictouch.org/what_is_tt.html.

²⁸² Helena Blavatsky, "What is Theosophy?" *Therapeutic Touch*, accessed December 18, 2013, <http://www.blavatsky.net/blavatsky/arts/WhatIsTheosophy.htm>. Blavatsky describes Theosophy as follows. "Theosophy is, then, the archaic *Wisdom-Religion*, the esoteric doctrine once known in every ancient country having claims to civilization. This 'Wisdom' all the old writings show us as an emanation of the divine Principle; and the clear comprehension of it is typified in such names as the Indian Buddh [sic], the Babylonian Nebo, the Thoth of Memphis, the Hermes of Greece; in the appellations, also, of some goddesses--Metis, Neitha, Athena, the Gnostic *Sophia*, and finally the Vedas, from the word 'to know.' Under this designation, all the ancient philosophers of the East and West, the Hierophants of old Egypt, the Rishis of Aryavart, the Theodidaktoi of Greece, included all knowledge of things occult and essentially divine."

²⁸³ Theosophical Society in America, "Christianity and Theosophy," *Theosophical Society in America*, accessed December 17, 2013, <http://www.theosophical.org/online-resources/leaflets/1792>.

whatever occurs in a person's life in human control and attributes occurrences to causes from a former life.²⁸⁴ Reincarnation is an Eastern philosophy in which the soul of the departed returns in a new body, either human or animal, and this birth-rebirth cycle is repeated until enlightenment is attained as a result one's actions.

Neither karma nor reincarnation allows for divine interaction with humanity. Both of these Hindu/Buddhist concepts are human-centered ideas that view individuals as having control of their destinies in repeated next lives by their actions in this life. Clearly these are not biblical concepts, which, if left uncontested, can do irreparable harm to those who are spiritually naïve or lack spiritual discernment. Impartation of spiritual essences through non-biblical media invites potential contact with spiritual beings that are neither angelic nor the Holy Spirit. More than being simply different, any spiritual activity that occurs as a result of Therapeutic Touch has no connection to the Triune God, and may even result in the need for deliverance from occultist and demonic influence.

Testing the Spirits

Philippians 1:9–10 encourages believers to be discerning in order to “approve the things that are excellent.” This discernment reaches all aspects of life, including the participation in activities that may be questionable and have spiritual implications. On-

²⁸⁴ Berkeley Center for Religion, Peace, and World Affairs, “Karma (Hinduism),” *Resources on Faith, Ethics, and Public Life*, accessed on December 23, 2013, <http://berkeleycenter.georgetown.edu/resources/essays/karma-hinduism>. This site defines the relationship between the Hindu concept of karma and reincarnation. “Karma is the Hindu view of causality in which good deeds, words, thoughts, and commands lead to beneficial effects for a person, and bad deeds, words, thoughts, and commands lead to harmful effects. These effects are not necessarily immediate but can be visited upon a soul in future lives through reincarnation; additionally, good or bad fortune experienced in life may be the result of good or bad actions performed in a past life. One's karmic state affects the reincarnation of the soul: good karma may lead to reincarnation as a human while bad karma can lead to reincarnation as an animal or other forms of non-human life.”

site full disclosure of its Eastern theological and occultist origins and a patient's written consent to undergo this treatment does not appear to be a high priority in the context of hospitals and medical centers. This non-disclosure requires the client to search out the information. Reiki and Therapeutic Touch have spiritual elements, and therefore, should require participants to become aware of and discern whether or not the activity is one worth involvement, particularly as a follower of Christ. The continual failure to disclose this information can lull patients into a false sense of security as very few would likely launch their own investigation into what are increasingly becoming mainstream practices.

Ultimately, a Christian's participation in such alternative activities becomes an issue of Christian ethics, which cannot be separated from Holy Spirit theology. Should a believer participate as a recipient or as a technician in a spiritual activity that either deviates from or is in opposition to the person and work of the Holy Spirit? The Apostle John offers guidelines that are applicable and offers the wisdom of God.

Beloved, do not believe every spirit, but test the spirits to see whether they are from God, because many false prophets have gone out into the world. By this you know the Spirit of God: every spirit that confesses that Jesus Christ has come in the flesh is from God; and every spirit that does not confess Jesus is not from God; this is the *spirit* of the antichrist, of which you have heard that it is coming, and now it is already in the world. You are from God, little children, and have overcome them; because greater is He who is in you than he who is in the world. They are from the world; therefore they speak *as* from the world, and the world listens to them. We are from God; he who knows God listens to us; he who is not from God does not listen to us. By this we know the spirit of truth and the spirit of error (1 John 4:1-6).

Whereas the context of guidance in 1 John 4:1-6 is in response to that of the threat of Gnosticism influencing the early church, the principle of testing and discernment holds true for today. "He who knows God," still applies to those who are "from God," and listen to God's guidance.

Syncretism of New Age thought is as strong a threat to the church as it has ever been. The injunction to be discerning is critical in an age when it has become socially acceptable to be tolerant of all beliefs. Ruth Moon's interview of Dr. Candy Gunther Brown, religion professor at Indiana University and researcher of complementary and alternative medicine (CAM), reveals the implications of religious dimensions of CAM practices. Brown states that non-Christian practices like Easter bunnies have lost their original secular association, however, with yoga and CAM, the religious associations are still very much present.²⁸⁵ To further explain, Brown says, "Christians may say it's a neutral container, and we'll just shift the contents or replace ingredients like in a recipe. But in terms of what actually happens, it's not necessarily easy to shed the associations that go with the practices."²⁸⁶ The deception of the powers of darkness is real (2 Cor. 4:4), and believers are admonished, "Do not be bound together with unbelievers; for what partnership have righteousness and lawlessness, or what fellowship has light with darkness?" (2 Cor. 6:14).

Conclusions

The laying on of hands is a biblical method for receiving impartation. Besides communicating affirmation, imposition of hands is an outward sign of the spiritual inward reality and mainly acts as a transfer agent in the process of impartation when hands are used. The ritual of imposing hands is practiced in both liturgical and non-liturgical Christian contexts, in traditional churches as well as non-denominational

²⁸⁵ Ruth Moon, "Healer Beware," *Christianity Today* 57, no. 9, (November, 2013), 73.

²⁸⁶ Moon, 73.

groups, and in a variety of settings, but regardless of affiliations and context, essential concepts must emphatically be made clear.

First, impartations can and sometimes do occur with or without the laying on of hands. However, God has given the laying on of hands to the church as a gesture of blessing, deserving of inclusion in sacramental activities. To ignore this gesture as unimportant is to devalue a gift from the divine Giver.

Secondly, the substance of what is imparted whether blessing, gifts, healing, or empowerment, has its origin with God, not the person imposing hands even though the person may be the carrier of powerful anointing for service. If one had to depend on the holiness level of the person used to lay hands on people as opposed to the holiness of the Holy Spirit, who would be holy enough and how would this be discerned? Impartation of the Holy Spirit communicates holiness by which the believer may live life dead to sin and in obedience to God, a view espoused by Karl Barth. Impartation of gifts is intended for empowerment and service in the mission of the church to preach the gospel, make disciples, heal the sick, and set captives free.

Thirdly, prayer in faith to the God of the Bible accompanied with the laying on of hands to invoke power and blessing invites the goodness and giving nature of God, and its importance in the context of laying on of hands cannot be emphasized enough. This practice can be viewed as merely a tool for affirmation or an accidental contact worthy only of an apology, or given its rightful place, as a means by which the power of the living God is transmitted to the life of the person being touched. Invoking powers other than that of God invites evil and participating in activities of occultist origins is spiritually dangerous.

Lastly, all believers, both clergy and laity, are invited to participate in opportunities to bless others through prayer and the laying on of hands in its mission to follow the path of Jesus. The divine Giver empowers disciples to become givers created in the image of God. Theologian Edith M. Humphrey emphasizes this final point about community wherein she states, “Ongoing healing and transformation takes place as we are joined with him [Jesus] and with each other, in ever-increasing intimacy, in the Eucharist and the life of the church.”²⁸⁷ For the Christian, the role of imposing hands as a transfer agent communicates a three-way connection between the recipient, the person imposing hands, and the Holy Spirit. Humphrey emphasizes the importance of this gesture in the large view of Christianity stating, “the impartation of anointing through the laying on of hands was an important catalyst for effective ministry characterized by the manifest presence of God, and for operating in the complete gifts of the Holy Spirit. It was this first Church—small, despised and poor—that changed the world!”²⁸⁸

One might argue that the laying on of hands is not critical in receiving blessings, charismata, or empowerment, but as a result, this attitude may relegate its practice to a casual affair of choice and lose its value. However, in light of the incredibly long history of its use in Christian activities, the natural urge for humans to touch one another to communicate connection and community, affirmation, and compassion, and the imperatives of Scripture for the laying on of hands as a fundamental doctrine, the weight of evidence favors the continuance and appreciation of the worthiness and blessing of this practice. When properly administered, the Church understands that the Holy Spirit

²⁸⁷ Edith M. Humphrey, *Ecstasy and Intimacy: When the Holy Spirit Meets the Human Spirit* (Grand Rapids, MI: William B. Eerdmans, 2006), 4.

²⁸⁸ Clark, *There Is More!*, 26.

desires to impart blessing, empowerment, and *charismata* for the edification of the Church and the fulfillment of its mission. Perhaps the current Third Wave emphasis on impartation, along with teaching on the laying on of hands, will retrieve this doctrine from the dusty corners of neglect and restore it to its rightful place as a powerful means to intentionally bless the people of God.

CHAPTER FIVE

THEORETICAL FOUNDATIONS

Introduction

Besides the context of religion, theoretical foundations for the impartation through the laying on of hands may draw from history, medicine, psychology, sociology, and even New Age thought. In these disciplines, the discussion of the laying on of hands is usually in the context of health care and healing, but is also integrated with spirituality and philosophy. New Age philosophy in particular touches both health and spirituality.

Voices from Church History

In his article, “Taught by the Apostles,” Eastern Orthodox theologian John Behr explains that during the second and third centuries, during which authority of bishops and presbyters was conferred by the laying on of hands, apostolic succession of bishops was used as a strong argument for the legitimacy of Christianity. It was the means of differentiating Christianity from Gnostic groups, which were considered heretical.²⁸⁹ The other two bases of confirming the credibility of Christianity were the reliance on Scripture, and the traditions of the apostles.²⁹⁰ Thus, the legacy of the early fathers has

²⁸⁹ John Behr, “Taught by the Apostles,” *Christian History & Biography* no. 96 (Fall 2007): 31–32, accessed March 14, 2014, *Religion and Philosophy Collection*. EBSCOhost, 31–32.

²⁹⁰ Behr, 31.

established the laying on of hands as an integral part of the ordination or commissioning rituals, which has remained in place for centuries.

Because the church's organization and government was in its infancy, the passing on of the true faith was a critical issue in that authority was closely connected to direct and unbroken lineage of ordained bishops and presbyters. Behr states, "Succession of leadership was not a guarantee of truth, but a powerful witness to the truth that is the common inheritance of all who belong to the Great Church, all who carry on the teachings of the apostles—wherever they may be."²⁹¹ The ritual of the laying on of hands in this context was the official transfer of authority as well as sacramental impartation.

Allen Brent's research and article, "Cyprian's Reconstruction of the Martyr Tradition," confirms the use of the laying on of hands as critical indicator of official authority beginning from the time of Cyprian and forward in the development of ecclesiastical structure.²⁹² The issue of bishopric authority during Cyprian's time centered on the restoration of clergy who recanted during the early persecutions. On the one hand, some received the recanted, "without the episcopal act of imposition of hands, reconcile[d] simply by readmission to communion,"²⁹³ while others required the laying on of hands by bishops.

According to Brent, Cyprian insisted that bishops receive the recanted with the ritual of the laying on of hands to establish their authority as clergy. The exceptions were

²⁹¹ Behr, 32.

²⁹² Allen Brent, "Cyprian's Reconstruction of the Martyr Tradition," *The Journal of Ecclesiastical History* 53, no. 2 (April 2002): 241–68, accessed March 14, 2014, retrieved from <http://ezproxy.purchase.edu:2048/login?url=http://search.proquest.com/docview/229765602?accountid=14171>, 241–68.

²⁹³ Brent, 242.

those who first recanted but later confessed Christianity and experienced subsequent suffering of martyrs. They were accepted based on their suffering in the image of Christ.²⁹⁴ Brent states, “Cyprian had to impose a quite separate act of absolution, in the form of a laying on of hands by a bishop, quite distinct from the function of the presbyters and deacons, and the Eucharist that they consecrated and administered.”²⁹⁵ It is clear, therefore, that the laying on of hands as a conferring ritual was taken seriously and with authority in the early church, resulting in the continuation of the ritual in the ordination of clergy among many church denominational traditions.

John Fleter Tipei’s *The Laying on of Hands in the New Testament: Its Significance, Techniques, and Effects* is the singular recent and most comprehensive monograph that provides exegeses of all New Testament references to the laying on of hands, as well as scholarly investigation of ancient Jewish, Graeco-Roman, and Near Eastern literature on the subject.²⁹⁶ This information provides tremendous value for informing the biblical, historical, and theological foundations of this project. Tipei’s monograph is particularly beneficial as a source for designing curriculum for the study of the laying on of hands as a doctrine of the Church.

For a more recent historical context, Heather D. Curtis, Tufts University professor of Christian history, traces the worldview of nineteenth century thought regarding suffering and healing as a prelude to the Faith-cure Movement in conjunction with the Holiness Movement of the late nineteenth in her noteworthy monograph entitled *Faith in*

²⁹⁴ Brent, 262–64.

²⁹⁵ Brent, 262.

²⁹⁶ John Fleter Tipei, *The Laying on of Hands in the New Testament: Its Significance, Techniques, and Effects* (Lanham, MD: University Press of America, 2009).

*the Great Physician: Suffering and Divine Healing in American Culture, 1860–1900.*²⁹⁷

These movements have been particularly significant in the development of Pentecostalism and the Charismatic Movement of the twentieth century and the resurgence of the use of the laying on of hands among believers, clergy as well as laity. Curtis states, “Like the larger Holiness and Higher Life movement out of which it [divine healing movement] emerged, divine healing attracted a broad range of followers from a wide variety of denominational and regional backgrounds.”²⁹⁸

Curtis discusses the shift of thought from the ideal of patiently suffering as a sign of spirituality to that of actively seeking healing as a demonstration of the presence and power of God. The healing practice Curtis describes is accomplished through prayer and the imposition of hands and occasionally oil, and is based on Scripture, particularly the injunction of Mark 16:18 and the directive of James 5:14–16. In addition, the theology of healing in the atonement became a critical argument for expecting the power of God to heal. Essentially, healing in the atonement is based on Isaiah 53:3–5, whereby through the suffering of Jesus access to healing by the authority of His name is provided (Mark 16:15–18).

Charles Cullis (1833–92), Sarah Mix (1832–84), and Ethan O. Allan (1813–1902), significant forerunners of the faith-cure movement, are noted for the laying on of hands and prayer for the impartation of healing.²⁹⁹ Cullis was particularly known for his healing home where the sick would go for hands-on healing. Later, in the early twentieth

²⁹⁷ Heather D. Curtis, *Faith in the Great Physician: Suffering and Divine Healing in American Culture* (Baltimore, MD: The Johns Hopkins University Press, 2007).

²⁹⁸ Curtis, *Faith in the Great Physician*, 196.

²⁹⁹ Curtis, *Faith in the Great Physician*, 8–10.

century, healing homes were also a primary feature of Alexander Dowie's Zion City and John G. Lake's ministry in Seattle, Washington. Eventually those original homes were closed, but more recent interest in healing rooms following similar protocols to that of Lake has emerged. Typically, these new healing rooms are locations where healing prayer is offered, but they are not residential facilities.

Faith-cure advocates were not without critics and warnings. Warnings of abuse as "mesmeric healers" associated with such occultic practices as clairvoyance and spiritism, as well as a variety of quack medicines and therapies such as "electro-biology," were published.³⁰⁰ William E. Boardman (1810–86), a strong voice for hands-on healing believed that personal holiness was essential in ministering with the laying on of hands. Curtis writes, "Without safeguard of sanctification on the part of those leading the services of prayer and anointing, Boardman warned, healing rituals were susceptible to corruption that opened the individual to infiltration of unholy influences."³⁰¹ According to Boardman, if not in touch with the Holy Spirit, the healer may well have been dabbling with demonic spirits to the harm of the person seeking prayer. Contemporary Christians concerned about the influence and syncretism of New Age based therapies (Therapeutic Touch and Reiki) may have the same concerns.

Besides the issues of holiness in practice, advocates of Calvinist cessationism spoke against the practices of divine healing. Princeton seminary theologian Benjamin Warfield attributed the results of divine healing to the psychological power of

³⁰⁰ Curtis, *Faith in the Great Physician*, 126.

³⁰¹ Curtis, *Faith in the Great Physician*, 127

suggestion.³⁰² Warfield also argued that the miracles, signs, and wonders found in the New Testament are primarily tools of evangelism to establish the church in its infancy, and consequently have ceased to exist.³⁰³ Furthermore, as Curtis states, “Warfield championed the ideal of sanctified suffering.”³⁰⁴ Warfield’s view attributes sickness, disease, and suffering as “from His Fatherly hand, and always in His loving pleasure works together with all things which befall God’s children, for good.”³⁰⁵ In contrast to this sanctified suffering ideal, Curtis succinctly summarizes the Healing Movement perspective.

To act [in] faith was to defy a central premise of Reformed theology and to reject the authority of medical experts; to receive the laying on of hands was to close one’s minds to rationalism and materialism while opening one’s body to the incursion of supernatural power; to abandon one’s self to God was to stretch certain normative constructions of gender without transgressing their limits.³⁰⁶

The Pentecostal movement, which was primarily launched by the Azusa Street revival of the early twentieth century, drew many from the Holiness groups and continued the practices of healing prayer, while adding the new dimensions brought about by the revival. Curtis notes that Pentecostals subsequent to the Holiness Movement continued practices directed at healing, “such as united prayer, laying on of hands, and anointing,” while engaging “adopted ecstatic forms of worship such as trances, falling down in the spirit, and especially speaking in tongues, which earlier advocates of divine

³⁰² Curtis, *Faith in the Great Physician*, 202.

³⁰³ Curtis, *Faith in the Great Physician*, 202.

³⁰⁴ Curtis, *Faith in the Great Physician*, 203.

³⁰⁵ Curtis, *Faith in the Great Physician*, 202.

³⁰⁶ Curtis, *Faith in the Great Physician*, 209.

healing had rejected.”³⁰⁷ These practices continued throughout the twentieth century and continue to this day. The laying on of hands rituals for the impartation of spiritual blessing and gifts besides healing were emphasized in the mid-twentieth century through the Latter Day Rain Movement, and subsequently the Charismatic and Third Wave Movements as described in the historical foundations chapter.

Medical, Psychological, Sociological Contexts

Of the many contexts for the laying on of hands ritual, arguably the most common is for impartation of healing. Within the last few decades, the medical community has exponentially embraced the complementary alternative medicine approach that includes hands-on healing therapies. Growing interest in the psychological and sociological fields has also emerged. Most common are Therapeutic Touch and Reiki, which rely on touch and “channeling” as part of the protocol, with hundreds of hospitals offering the service of practitioners, mostly nurses.

To better understand the results of “energy” medicine studies, terms such as channeling and the placebo effect need definition. Channeling is when the practitioners presumably empty themselves of distractions and focus on the “inner being” to transfer what they believe is universal energy in order to give the patient balance in their “energy field.” It must be noted that no scientific evidence of universal energy, energy fields, or biofields has been proven. Furthermore, channeling and being in touch with the “inner self” has its origins in New Age Movement philosophy, not in medical or scientific domains.

³⁰⁷ Curtis, *Faith in the Great Physician*, 201.

Placebo Effect and Bioenergy Therapies

Placebo effect is when the patient shows some improvement based on expectation to feel better rather than any medicinal intervention. Placebo effect has been common knowledge for at least a hundred years and medical professionals acknowledge its effect on the well-being of patients. Much of what has been claimed as relief of pain can be attributed to this natural phenomenon. If one expects to feel better as a result of a procedure, the likelihood of feeling better is enhanced. The patient's anxiety is reduced and consequently, often does feel better; however, it does not effect actual healing of the sickness or condition. It can, therefore, be argued that these therapies may have some positive benefits; however, the risk of spiritual pollution may outweigh the benefits. As with impartation of spiritual gifts, the questions that arise are about efficacy and effect of the impartation in hands-on healing modalities. Do the protocols of touch therapies outside of Christian healing help patients or does a possibility of harm exist? Furthermore, can a difference be distinguished between Christian healing and touch therapies?

Wayne B. Jonas and Cindy C. Crawford, directory and researching assistant for the Samueli Institute, a non-profit research institute that focuses on the safety and effectiveness of medical practices, reported on over 2,000 studies about the efficacy of various alternative "energy" medicine and spiritual healing methods.³⁰⁸ Among the various healing practices studied were religious and spiritual practices, intercessory and

³⁰⁸ Wayne B. Jonas, and Cindy C. Crawford, "Science and Spiritual Healing: A Critical Review of Spiritual Healing, 'Energy' Medicine, and Intentionality," *Alternative Therapies in Health & Medicine* 9, no. 2 (March 2003): 56–59, accessed March 14, 2014, *Academic Search Complete*, EBSCOhost, 57.

healing prayer, and “energy” healing. The studies were rated for evidence level and quality.

In the religious and spiritual practices category of their research, Jones and Crawford report, “Research indicates that various religious practices have consistent beneficial associations with health.”³⁰⁹ Furthermore, they state, “Benefits include reduced mortality, better physical health, reports of improved quality of life, and less mental illness and drug abuse in those who practice these behaviors.”³¹⁰ Related to this category is the intercessory and healing prayer category, which also reported positive outcomes. Jonas and Crawford state, “Positive effects at this level of evidence were reported for patients in a cardiac care unit and for patients with Human Immunovirus (HIV) complications and other conditions.”³¹¹

While this may be viewed with optimism, a closer look at the research tells a different story. In contrast to the positive found with religious and spiritual practices, the results of the “energy” healing practices, which involves channeling of a “biofield” through the healer to the patient, was “judged ‘poor to fair’ and the evidence level was B [at least one properly randomized, controlled experiment that rates high quality]. Positive effects have been reported on the alleviation of pain and anxiety in burn patients and institutionalized elderly, respectively.”³¹² These limited results are no different from the placebo effect without “energy” practices, which essentially results in patients feeling

³⁰⁹ Jonas and Crawford, 56.

³¹⁰ Jonas and Crawford, 57.

³¹¹ Jonas and Crawford, 58.

³¹² Jonas and Crawford, 58.

better because they expect to feel better. Jonas and Crawford conclude that the impact within the clinical setting offers a positive outlook for hands-on healing. They state that the decision to include healers in clinical settings “resulted in improvement in symptoms and well-being of some (but not all) of the chronically ill patients involved in the studies and changed the perceptions and behavior of doctors, healers, and patients about this practice.”³¹³

While complementary alternative medicine (CAM) is a rapidly growing industry globally, and the hands-on therapies for pain and anxiety reduction have held out promise, a closer examination shows less than stellar results. E. Ernst of the Universities of Exeter and Plymouth, United Kingdom, presents the results of a study in his article for the *Support Care Cancer* publication involving hands-on healers who channel cosmic energy when compared to a group of actors who pretended to be healers. He states that the results find “no evidence that the ‘healer’ was more effective than the ‘actor’ in improving the well-being of patients.”³¹⁴ Besides no efficacy of healing beyond placebo effect, the author is concerned that the “energy” transfer healers may even be harmful in holding out false hope or the potential involvement of charlatans.

Clare Weze, Helen L. Leathard, and Gretchen Stevens, researchers at St. Martin’s College, Lancaster, United Kingdom, found similar results in their study of healing by gentle touch.³¹⁵ These researchers found reduction of the intensity of pain in gentle touch

³¹³ Jonas and Crawford, 59.

³¹⁴ E. Ernst, “‘Laying on of Hands’: Magic or Medicine?” *Support Care Cancer* 15.11 (November 2006): 121–22, accessed February 25, 2014, *Proquest*, 122.

³¹⁵ Clare Weze, Helen L. Leathard, and Gretchen Stevens, “Evaluation of Healing by Gentle Touch for the Treatment of Musculoskeletal Disorders,” *American Journal of Public Health* 94, no. 1

as an adjunct to standard medical procedures.³¹⁶ The results did not show healing of disease per se, but it did show that the placebo effect aids in anxiety reduction through comfort and mental expectation.

In their book, *The Biblical Guide to Alternative Medicine*, Neil T. Anderson and Michael Jacobson provide detailed information involving Therapeutic Touch and show results similar to the Clare Weze research group.³¹⁷ Their report shows five clinical trials, four in 1998 and one in 2001, in which only one of the five show positive results, and that is in the relief of pain, depression, and anxiety.³¹⁸ The 1998 study involving osteoarthritis showed mixed results of improvement in some, but not all participants.³¹⁹ The 1998 study of whether or not practitioners display “field energy” near one hand showed no such field; the 1998 study of low back pain showed no improvement with Therapeutic Touch; and the 2001 study involving carpal tunnel syndrome showed no improvement in pain, relaxation, or median nerve conduction.³²⁰

Giancarlo Lucchetti, Alessandra L. Granero, and Rodrigo M. Bassi of the Sao Paulo Medical Spiritist Association and Marlene Rossi Severino Nobre of the Brazilian and International Medical Spiritist Associations state that in Brazil, Spiritism is the third largest religion and claims approximately 2.3 million adherents, 60% of whom are well

(January 2004): 50–52, accessed February 25, 2014, *Social Sciences Full Text (H.W. Wilson)*, EBSCOhost, 50–52.

³¹⁶ Weze, Leathard, and Stevens, 50–52.

³¹⁷ Neil T. Anderson and Michael Jacobson, *The Biblical Guide to Alternative Medicine*, Rev. ed. (Ventura, CA: Regal Books, 2003), 293.

³¹⁸ Anderson and Jacobson, 293.

³¹⁹ Anderson and Jacobson, 293.

³²⁰ Anderson and Jacobson, 293.

educated and wealthy.³²¹ According to Lucchetti et al., between six and ten thousand people are served daily in Sao Paulo with spiritism classes and spiritual healing free of charge.³²² Therapies they have researched include prayer, the laying on of hands, fluidotherapy (magnetized water), charity/volunteering, spirit education/moral values, and disobsession (spirit release therapy).³²³

This project is particularly concerned with the therapies involving the laying on of hands and its health outcomes in the Lucchetti project. The Lucchetti research identifies Therapeutic Touch as the spiritist practice, and describes this as psychic energy transfusion. The studies show decreased behavioral symptoms for patients suffering from dementia, decrease pain with patients undergoing chemotherapy for cancers, but either non-significant or no difference in burn patients or patients undergoing stereotactical biopsy, carpal tunnel or postoperative pain.³²⁴ It appears that the results are sporadic and inconsistent. Lucchetti et al. conclude that their study points to “positive effect of therapeutic touch on behavioral symptoms and in most pain studies, while presenting contradictory results regarding anxiety.”³²⁵ They note that they believe research in general is insufficient and needs further study. It would seem that placebo effect could be causal for their findings in positive effects since it is only in the behavioral areas.

³²¹ Giancarlo Lucchetti, Alessandra L. Granero Lucchetti, Rodrigo M. Bassi, and Marlene Rossi Severino Nobre, “Complementary Spiritist Therapy: Systematic Review of Scientific Evidence,” *Evidence-Based Complementary & Alternative Medicine (Ecam)* 8, no. 1 (January 2011): 1–18, accessed February 25, 2014, *AltHealthWatch*, EBSCOhost, 1.

³²² Lucchetti et al., 2.

³²³ Lucchetti et al., 1.

³²⁴ Lucchetti et al., 2.

³²⁵ Lucchetti et al., 8.

Joanne E. Stephen, faculty member of Frazer University, British Columbia, Canada, along with Gina Mackenzie, Sarah Sample, and Jennifer Macdonald, fellow researchers, investigated the use of Therapeutic Touch as a CAM practice among patients in the context of the British Columbia Cancer Agency. Their research involved “supportive intervention” used to “elicit the relaxation response and to promote a general sense of well-being.”³²⁶ Their conclusion is that Therapeutic Touch is “safe, noninvasive, and mitigates anxiety, pain, and stress.”³²⁷

Stephen et al. further investigated why Therapeutic Touch might have efficacy in patient care. They found that the theory of bioenergetics is unproven and has no scientific foundation. Furthermore, they found that a plausible theory of the successes of Therapeutic Touch has more to do with the placebo effect, a “genuine and powerful, although mysterious, effect accounting for approximately 30% of treatment benefit.”³²⁸ Although not given rigorous scientific study, it appears from the studies presented that Therapeutic Touch success hinges on the patient’s anxiety reduction when a practitioner gives personal attention in a gentle setting, which can easily be accomplished by other protocols. Furthermore, while it does accomplish stress reduction in the natural healing process, it does not accomplish healing of the disease.

Paul C. Reissner raises an important point about the promise “field energy” therapies. It is not only the efficacy of these therapies, but also what is happening to

³²⁶ Joanne E. Stephen, Gina Mackenzie, Sarah Sample, and Jennifer MacDonald, “Twenty Years of Therapeutic Touch in a Canadian Cancer Agency: Lessons Learned from a Case Study of Integrative Oncology Practice,” *Supportive Care in Cancer* 15.8 (August 2007): 993–98, accessed February 25, 2014, Proquest, 993.

³²⁷ Stephen et al., 993.

³²⁸ Stephen et al., 994.

affect change. Reissner states, "The crucial question is not just whether objective (or subjective) healings actually take place, but what they mean. If a patient feels more relaxed after a session of Therapeutic Touch, is it because prana [Sanskrit word for "life force"] has been unruffled or because the healer's voice and manner were soothing?"³²⁹

Psychology and Sociology

Clinical psychologists Carmel Jones Harrison, Robert S. P. Jones, and Jaci C Huws discuss their qualitative study on the effect of either offering or excluding touch in clinical psychologist settings.³³⁰ According to Harrison et al., Freud suggested that touch is a transfer agent in a therapeutic setting, and therefore, should be strictly avoided in order for therapy to be effective. However, the Harrison researchers claim the opposite based on the work of Hunter and Struve (1998).³³¹ Contrary to Freud's position and in agreement with Hunter and Struve, Harrison et al. conclude that touch does provide support and empathy for the patient. Although they acknowledge that professionals are hesitant to touch their patients due to their perceived risks, their research showed clients responded positively and they recommend touch "within best ethical practice."³³²

³²⁹ Paul C. Reisser, Teri K. Reisser, and John Weldon, *New Age Medicine: A Christian Perspective on Holistic Medicine*, Rev. exp. ed. (Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press, 1988), 48.

³³⁰ Carmel Harrison, Robert S. P. Jones, and Jaci C. Huws, "'We're People Who Don't Touch': Exploring Clinical Psychologists' on Their Use of Touch Therapy," *Counseling Psychology Quarterly* 25, no. 3 (September 2012): 227–87, accessed March 14, 2014, *Psychology and Behavioral Sciences Collection*, EBSCOhost, 277.

³³¹ Harrison, Jones, and Huws, 277.

³³² Harrison, Jones, and Huws, 286.

From the perspective of social work and counseling therapy, Kathleen McKinney makes a strong case for appropriate and sensitive touch as a means of reducing anxiety, helping clients manage emotions, and express concern and care.³³³ The concern in the clinical context is the risks involved with touch, that is, having touch misunderstood and misread by the client.³³⁴ Nevertheless, McKinney argues that touch could be a valuable tool for therapists in their work; however, the use of touch in this context is strictly supportive, not curative.

The Royal Touch

A unique context from the past for impartation of healing through the laying on of hands is the ritual of English and French monarchs. Royalty laying hands on individuals having disease, particularly scrofula (tubercular adenitis typically transmitted by bacteria in unpasteurized milk and quite common in medieval times), had the expectation that the touch of the anointed monarch would transfer healing. If the person was not healed, it was explained away as lack of faith on the part of the sick person.³³⁵ Stephen Brogan's research describes the accompanying liturgy of the ceremony in England, in which specific prayers are invoked, hands are imposed upon the wounds by the monarch, and the individual receives a gold coin called an angel or touch piece from the monarch.³³⁶

³³³ McKinney, and Diane A. Kempson, "Losing Touch in Social Work Practice," *Social Work* 57, no. 2 (April 2012): 189–91, accessed February 25, 2014, *Social Sciences Full Text (H.W. Wilson)*, EBSCOhost, 189–91.

³³⁴ McKinney and Kempson, 189–91.

³³⁵ Stephen Brogan, "The Royal Touch," *History Today* 61, no. 2 (February 2011): 46–52, accessed March 14, 2014, *Humanities Source*, EBSCOhost, 46.

³³⁶ Brogan, 47.

The practice dates back to at least Henry I (1003–66).³³⁷ French ceremonies of the royal touch varied in that alms were given and the monarch moved about the crowd of sufferers rather than the English procedure of bringing individuals one at a time before the monarch.³³⁸

According to Brogan's seminal research at the University of London on the topic of royal touch, King James VI and I (1566–1625), who was staunchly Calvinist, was not especially invested in the belief of the efficacy of the laying on of hands in healing, attributing the ceremony as superstitious.³³⁹ James viewed healing from a cessationist perspective, that is, that supernatural occurrences ceased with the death of the first apostles and early church fathers. Nonetheless, he continued the practice, distributing an average of 870 angels a year.³⁴⁰ James reconciled the practice to his Calvinist Protestant tradition by acknowledging that God heals whom He chooses, thereby leaving the issue entirely as the sovereignty of God's will for the individual.³⁴¹ The effect of this move was to placate the demand of the populous for their tradition while appeasing the doctrinal demands of the king's church.

The imposition of the monarch's hand for impartation of healing was thoroughly entrenched in pre-modern English culture and commonly understood as exemplified by its reference in Shakespeare's play, *Macbeth*. In Act IV, Scene III, the scene involves Macduff and a doctor. In the play, the doctor, referring to the English king, replies to

³³⁷ Brogan, 52.

³³⁸ Brogan, 52.

³³⁹ Brogan, 47–49.

³⁴⁰ Brogan, 51.

³⁴¹ Brogan, 52.

Macduff, “Ay, sir; there are a crew of wretched souls That stay his cure: their malady convinces The great assay of art; but at his [the king] touch [laying on of hands]—Such sanctity hath heaven given his hand—They presently amend.”³⁴² In Malcolm’s reply, he says, “The mere despair of surgery he cures. Hanging a golden stamp [the angel coin] about their necks, Put on with holy prayers: and ‘tis spoken, To the succeeding royalty he leaves The healing benediction.”³⁴³ Without explanation, modern day audiences of Shakespeare would not have any reference points for these words, whereas the English Renaissance audience would have had no need for clarification at all.

New Age Views

Dennis Alexander, Qugong doctor (practice involving slow movement, breathing, and focus for meditation and healing) and Reiki Master practitioner in Florida, claims that the Reiki ritual realigns the “life force energy,” and that it comes from God.³⁴⁴ The practitioner of Reiki presumably transfers “life force energy” by the laying on of hands to reduce stress and promote healing.³⁴⁵ In his article, “What Can Reiki Do?” Alexander describes a healing session in which he states,

I summoned up St. Germaine and all the ascended masters to enter this child and fix all that was wrong. All of a sudden my body became the conduit for each of them! Christ, Buddha, Mary, Joseph, Luke, Ixhell, St. Francis, Quan Yin, name

³⁴² William Shakespeare, *Macbeth*. In *The Complete Works of Shakespeare*, accessed March 16, 2014, <http://shakespeare.mit.edu/macbeth/full.html>. Upper case and form of English are quoted as indicated in the original text. Bracketed comments are added by researcher for clarity.

³⁴³ Shakespeare, *Macbeth*.

³⁴⁴ Dennis Alexander, “What Can REIKI Do?” *New Times Naturally!* (August 2008): 16–17, accessed February 25, 2014, *AltHealthWatch*, EBSCOhost, 16–17.

³⁴⁵ Alexander, 16–17.

the avatar, name the God or Goddess and they shot through me like lightening [sic] into her!³⁴⁶

It would be inconceivable for a Christian to accept this as sound or desirable doctrine. Something from the spirit world could well have entered Alexander, but no biblical doctrine, Scripture, or Christian theology supports this kind of spiritual experience other than the demonic. This example of a leading practitioner provokes one to wonder about the spiritual contacts being made by other practitioners, even unwittingly, without full disclosure to patients or their permission for such activity.

Wouter Hanegraaff, research fellow at the University of Utrecht, Netherlands, has compiled a comprehensive and objective monograph on the New Age Movement, its historical development, diverse philosophies and contexts, and syncretistic influences. Hanegraaff defines channeling of the kind used in Therapeutic Touch and Reiki. He states, “They [people who channel] appear to concentrate on setting aside or circumventing rational ‘ego’ control by various means, allowing imagination and the ‘stream of consciousness’ to express itself freely in speech.”³⁴⁷ Another type of channeling, trance channeling, is defined as people who “display an obvious similarity with ‘spirit possession’ as known from shamanic contexts,”³⁴⁸ which is also different from hearing voices and seeing visions associated with mysticism. When energy medicine practitioners channel, they open themselves to intuitive expressions, but are

³⁴⁶ Alexander, 16–17.

³⁴⁷ Wouter J. Hanegraaff, *New Age Religion and Western Culture: Esotericism in the Mirror of Secular Thought* (Albany, NY: State University of New York, 1988), 33.

³⁴⁸ Hanegraaff, 33.

also risk being open to shamanic experience, which might explain Alexander's experience. In contrast, the Christian healer does not give up any personal control of self.

In his discussion of alternative therapies, Hanegraaff makes a point of differentiating between western medicine's concepts of illness from that of the medical practices of traditional non-western cultures. He states, "While the healing of illness is central to the medical practice of traditional cultures, modern western medicine is characterized by its increasing concentration on curing relatively isolated diseases."³⁴⁹ The distinction between curing and healing is what frames the beliefs of energy medicines like Therapeutic Touch and Reiki. A holistic approach to healing sees the physical, emotional, psychological and even spiritual aspects of a person as integrated in which one aspect affects all of them. It does not focus on the specific disease, but rather on the holistic healing of the person, whereas western medicine targets disease with pharmacological or structural therapies ignoring the non-physical dimensions of patients.

Hanegraaff describes the role of the mind in holistic healing stating, "The immunity system or, alternatively the Indian chakra system, is seen as the connection between the spiritual, mental, and emotional faculties, on the one hand, and the physical body, on the other."³⁵⁰ It is therefore, fairly obvious why energy touch therapies have enjoyed increasing popularity in the nursing profession that is concerned with caring for the whole patient. However, following the line of reasoning in the holistic approach, the psychological disruption that causes disease can also be healed by the mind. Therefore,

³⁴⁹ Hanegraaff, 43.

³⁵⁰ Hanegraaff, 54.

by creating a revised psychological condition, patients then heal themselves.³⁵¹ This consigns the responsibility for healing entirely on the patient and exonerates any responsibility from the practitioner, which has provoked criticism among medical professionals.

Response to Bioenergy Therapies and Christian Healing

Susan Salladay approaches the issues surrounding “energy” therapies involving the laying on of hands that include Therapeutic Touch and Reiki from a Christian perspective and theology. Her main thesis is that these therapies are incompatible with traditional Christian doctrine because of their New Age and Neo-pagan [nature-based religious movement] foundations. Furthermore, for the traditional Christian, involvement in these therapies is “morally unacceptable and spiritually dangerous.”³⁵²

From the health care perspective, Salladay presents two disputed positions on touch therapy. On the one hand, some health care professionals see these therapies as purely religious practices without any medical substance, while others integrate these hands-on modalities as part of a holistic approach to patient care that includes medical, psychological, and spiritual components. To account for some pain relief noted by patients, Salladay notes the role of the placebo effect. Barring fraud or patient abuse (such as applying such therapies to unconscious patients), Salladay does, however,

³⁵¹ Hanegraaff, 54.

³⁵² Susan A. Salladay, “Should Christians Use Therapeutic Touch?” *Christian Bioethics: Non-Ecumenical Studies in Medical Morality* 8, no. 1 (April 2002): 25–41, accessed March 14, 2014, Religion and Philosophy Collection, EBSCOhost, 26.

acknowledge that the aforementioned modalities may have benefit as a placebo effect for patients who believe in the efficacy of those treatments.³⁵³

Salladay addresses informed consent as a major issue, particularly among professionals who view energy therapies as religious. She raises four issues along these lines. First of all, it can be confusing for the patient when the practitioner is not clergy. Health care professionals are generally viewed in a different light than clergy related individuals. Secondly, the Eastern mystic theological underpinnings of Therapeutic Touch and Reiki are incompatible with Christian thought and the syncretism in a clinical context presents conflicting theologies.³⁵⁴ Thirdly, Salladay contends that the theological origins of these energy therapies are not disclosed to patients. They are generally denied, possibly through ignorance of the practitioner, ignored as unimportant, or purposely concealed from patients.³⁵⁵ Lastly, Salladay exposes the issue of equivocation. Replacing the underlying theological theories of Therapeutic Touch and Reiki with medical sounding jargon creates intentional ambiguity whereby patients draw wrong conclusions in favor of the therapies.³⁵⁶ From the position of health care professionals who subscribe to energy therapies, the claim is that these therapies are generically spiritual, not specifically religious, and can benefit anyone regardless of their religious affiliation.³⁵⁷ Furthermore, its practitioners have various personal beliefs, as these therapies do not

³⁵³ Salladay, 26.

³⁵⁴ Salladay, 27.

³⁵⁵ Salladay, 27.

³⁵⁶ Salladay, 27.

³⁵⁷ Salladay, 28.

require a particular religious affiliation. However, Salladay's response to this argument states, "As a result, such practitioners will fail to recognize that such spiritually laden interventions are in fact incompatible and will be regarded by traditional Christians, Jews, and Moslems as characteristic of pagan syncretical impulses."³⁵⁸ The criticism of equivocation and informed consent figures prominently in this claim of generic spirituality.

The issue of syncretism is more than simply exchanging religious expression for medical jargon. It touches the heart of belief systems and truth for the patient. As is described in the theological foundation of this project, both Therapeutic Touch and Reiki are grounded in an Eastern syncretism of Buddhism, Hinduism, Wicca, New Age channeling, occultic practices, and other non-Christian spiritual systems.

Pantheism, the belief that God and the universe are one and the same, alleges that all religions are manifestations of the same thing, does not acknowledge sin or offer salvation, and views Jesus as another example of a good healer who was at one with the universe. Having its origins in theosophy, Therapeutic Touch presents a pantheistic view, and Reiki originates with Japanese spirituality, which is also grounded in universal energy notions. Practitioners are trained to connect to a Source (self, Higher Power) and then become the source in order to transfer universal energy within them while imposing hands. The generic spirituality of energy therapies is in direct contrast to God having specific personhood.

In Christianity, God is not a vague mystical source or universal energy field or force. God is a divine person. Christian scriptural healing is available with prayer and the

³⁵⁸ Salladay, 28.

laying on of hands, but God is the healer. The healing grace originates with God, prayer invokes God's grace, and it is God who uses human conduits to heal. In contrast to energy therapies in which the practitioner is the source of healing, Christian healing attributes all healing to God and is based on divine promise. Salladay's reference to Matthew 9:12's healing of the hemorrhagic woman sums up the difference.

He [Jesus] says to her, "Your faith has made you well." What does Jesus mean? Is Jesus telling this woman, "Congratulations! The therapeutic touch technique of unrufling hemlines has enabled you to clear your congested areas and raise the vibrations of your ordinary mind. Through the channeling of universal healing energy you have achieved a higher level of consciousness and become centered, calm and focused. Or is Jesus saying to her, "Good! You came to the right Person to be healed. You trusted Me. Your bleeding has ceased."³⁵⁹

In his recent book, *Healing Energy: Whose Is It?*, Randy Clark and co-author Sue Thompson emphasize the role of the Holy Spirit in the lives of believers with regard to healing. They clearly explain that the Holy Spirit communicates divine revelation to the believer stating, "Christian healing is dependent on the leading of the Holy Spirit who brings word (revelation) from the Father and the Son, and power to do miracles in Jesus' name."³⁶⁰ Clark and Thompson also address the bioenergy theories of Reiki and TT as having no direct curative effect. They conclude that if any positive outcomes of these therapies occur, they are attributed to the placebo effect in operation.

While Clark and Thompson acknowledge that the placebo effect can produce reduced anxiety, they contrast this limited benefit to the dramatic healings of the blind seeing, the deaf hearing, and the lame walking. Clark relates testimonies of healings in

³⁵⁹ Salladay, 41.

³⁶⁰ Clark and Thompson, 75–76.

Brazil during a 2012 mission trip to which I am an eyewitness.³⁶¹ A twelve-year-old girl had injuries to her Achilles tendon, along with a head injury causing double vision. One of the prayer teams on that mission trip prayed for her with the laying on of hands and the girl was completely healed. Another testimony tells of a woman who suffered cancer and was near death. A prayer team went to her house, and after they prayed for her with imposition of hands, the team left the home. A while later, word came to the team that the woman was completely healed.

During a church service on the same Brazil trip, a little girl who was raised from the dead in 2006 had never walked without leg braces. After prayer and imposition of hands, the braces were removed and she spent the entire time during the service skipping and romping about the church without the braces. As a member of the prayer team, I was not only privileged to see these miracles first hand, but also participated in praying for many people who were healed of illnesses and delivered of demonization. These stories are but a few of thousands that are taking place as Christians believe God's Word, hear from the Holy Spirit, and obey in praying and laying hands on the sick for the impartation of healing.

Besides the laying on hands for impartation of healing, Randy Clark also emphasizes impartation of blessing and spiritual gifts. Although the biblical, historical, and theological foundations for the laying on of hands as a ritual for impartation of spiritual blessing, empowerment, and gifts has been discussed, it is worth repeating that these impartations are not only for healing, but also for Kingdom living. As Clark notes, “‘Greater things than these [shall you do] because I go the Father’ in John 14:12 is clearly

³⁶¹ Clark and Thompson, 118–20.

not a reference to moral ethics, but through charismatic acts done through charismatic gifts made possible by the future ministry of the Holy Spirit.”³⁶²

Multiple examples of the operation of supernatural gifts involving prophecy, impartation of gifts, and blessing through the laying on of hands are found in the biographies of well-known movement leaders such as Maria Woodworth Etter, John G. Lake, William Branham, Oral Roberts, Kenneth E. Hagin, Smith Wigglesworth, and Lester Sumrall. Those spiritual leaders have passed the baton of charismatic leadership to others in this century. Their legacy is found in thousands of churches worldwide where the practice of laying on of hands for impartation is common in praxis, but rarely taught as doctrine. Albeit from different perspectives and context, Randy Clark and John Fleter Tipei are unique and exceptional in that they have published works specifically related to this doctrine.

A contemporary example of the power of the Holy Spirit’s work of impartation and prophecy accompanied by the laying on of hands in and through believers is the testimony of Dr. Heidi Baker of Iris Ministries in her book, *Birthing the Miraculous: The Power of Personal Encounters with God to Change Your Life and the World*.³⁶³ In this book, she describes her experience in Toronto, Canada, during the Toronto Blessing revival. Her words best tell the story of the Holy Spirit’s impartation and empowerment.

At the conference Randy Clark preached with great fire and conviction about the anointing, power, and destiny God wants to release upon us. I suddenly began to feel such desperation for God that I could not hold myself back from responding.

³⁶² Clark, *There is More!*, 105.

³⁶³ Heidi Baker, *Birthing the Miraculous: The Power of Personal Encounters with God to Change Your Life and the World* (Lake Mary, FL: Charisma House, 2014), Kindle.

. . . Randy stopped preaching. He put his hands on me and said, “God wants to know, do you want the nation of Mozambique?” I screamed “Yes!” with everything within me. He continued, “The blind will see, the deaf will hear, the crippled will walk, the dead will be raised, and the poor will hear the good news.” . . . After this impartation we returned to Mozambique. . . . Then, after one year, God opened the heavens. The word started coming true. The blind began to see. Then deaf began to hear. The crippled began to walk. Three of our Mozambican pastors raised people from the dead. Church growth exploded. . . . Since that time our movement has seen more than ten thousand churches planted in and around Mozambique.³⁶⁴

Baker’s testimony is remarkable and brings encouragement for all believers to seek God for guidance, direction, and impartation of empowerment. As Baker says, “When God places a promise inside us, we have to decide to nurture it and believe that it will be accomplished.”³⁶⁵ Her words affirm the role of faith in God and His work in the Body of Christ.

Conclusions

As Church history attests, from the early Church era, throughout the centuries, and into contemporary times, the laying on of hands has been, and continues to be, an imbedded gesture in the activities of spiritual life. It is utilized in general blessing of individuals, prayer for healing, empowerment for service, performance of sacraments, conferring the Holy Spirit, commissioning and ordination of ministers, reception of charismata, and possibly more. No other gesture connected to spirituality has this range of application diversity as the laying on of hands, and most importantly, with the expectation of something being released.

³⁶⁴ Baker, 5–9.

³⁶⁵ Baker, 109.

It seems that in recent years the fields of western medicine, psychology and sociology have caught the notion that touch is more than incidental for human beings. However, in its attempts to mitigate suffering and offer curative value with touch, the inclusion of such systems as Reiki and TT has been limited and inconclusive at best, and has, perhaps unwittingly, opened spiritual doors that may even be harmful. New Age syncretism is in complete opposition to Christian healing (frequently employing touch), which seeks curative results, not only placebo effect benefits. Christian healing is based on the scriptural directive to heal the sick, the belief in the power and authority to heal as imparted to believers by Jesus, and the empowerment of the Holy Spirit to act on New Testament imperatives.

CHAPTER SIX

PROJECT ANALYSIS

Introduction

This field experience is designed to increase the knowledge and understanding of the laying on of hands when praying, and to encourage more participation by congregants by teaching on the biblical credibility and efficacy of the ritual. Furthermore, it increases awareness of the possibility of negative impact of non-biblical contexts for the gesture of the laying on of hands. Ultimately, as a result of examining this often-neglected doctrine within the context of ministry, the Body of Christ is better positioned to enjoy the fullness of the impartation of the Holy Spirit's blessings and power.

Research Questions

In pursuing research within the context of ministry, some essential questions have guided the research. What do people believe about the laying on of hands? Does it matter, and if so, why? What patterns may be determined from responses as related to defined variables? Finally, does instruction and practical application on the topic promote change in understanding, attitude, and willingness to participate for the individual? These questions have been the driving force for the inquiry about diverse beliefs, attitudes, and experiences.

Hypothesis of Project

According to John W. Creswell, a non-directional hypothesis purposely lacks specificity of direction because the researcher does not have enough data from literature to create one with specificity.³⁶⁶ The hypothesis for this study is non-directional and indicates “the relationship among variables.”³⁶⁷ Along this line, the hypothesis for this study is that teaching on the laying on of hands and practical application of impartation prayer clarifies the participants’ understanding and knowledge of doctrine of the laying on of hands for impartation. As a result, it provides the basis for a greater appreciation of this ritual and increases participation by believers.

Qualitative Design in Phenomenological Framework

Overall, this study was designed to investigate the understandings and attitudes of a purposefully selected sampling³⁶⁸ of congregants in order to determine their beliefs and opinions about the doctrine of impartation through the laying on of hands, as well as an analysis of the experiences the participants were willing to share. The congregations were selected because of their general familiarity with the use of the laying on of hands gesture in various religious contexts, and their willingness to participate in the study. The very fact of their familiarity with the gesture makes them prime candidates for having misunderstandings that may need clarification through teaching.

³⁶⁶ John W. Creswell, *Research Design: Qualitative, Quantitative, and Mixed Methods Approaches*, 4th ed. (Thousand Oaks, CA: SAGE Publications, 2014), 145.

³⁶⁷ Creswell, 146.

³⁶⁸ Creswell, 189. Creswell describes the purposefully selected sampling as those who are available and willing to participate in the project and who are most likely to provide the researcher with the kind of information that will be helpful for understanding what is being researched. According to Creswell, this type of sampling is typically found with qualitative methodology.

To begin with, an observation of behavior was conducted to collect and record data about the practices during a typical church service with regard to the practice of the laying on of hands. An initial questionnaire was given to the participants to investigate their understanding and attitudes regarding the ritual of the laying on of hands. Teaching on the doctrine of the laying on of hands for impartation followed the initial questionnaire. As part of the teaching event, a time of prayer for impartation followed the speaking with an invitation of congregants to pray for each other accompanied by the laying on of hands. Any change in opinion or understanding as a result of teaching event is reflected on the post-teaching questionnaire. Subsequent to the teaching experience and post-teaching questionnaire, a post-behavior observation was conducted along with a focus group discussion involving volunteers from among the participants.

As a phenomenological framework study with some exploratory as well as some explanatory elements, the methodology involves both numerical and narrative data elements that provided patterns for analysis. The qualitative elements allowed for the perspectives of the participants to voice their thoughts. These were used to further analyze the outcomes. The project includes procedures of researching the problem, the collection and analysis of data, interpretation of data, and a call for action. The results of inquiry established some patterns and suggested interpretations of responses.

Role of the Researcher and Associates

During the field experience, the researcher served in a few different roles. She assumes the role of observer and recorder of behaviors related to the laying on of hands that are observed during typical worship services prior to and another after the teaching

event. During the teaching event, she functioned as a minister presenting the critical teaching and conducting an impartation experience with the congregation. Upon collecting data from questionnaires prior to and after the teaching event and the focus group discussions, the researcher tallied, coded, and analyzed the data from which patterns are noticed and conclusions may be drawn. During the focus group discussions, she served as facilitator in posing questions, probing for information, and recording data. Throughout the project, the researcher also functioned as a consulting researcher in partnership with the context leadership in the collection, analysis, and reporting of information. In this role, she conferred with context associates at each stage, sought their input, and responded to any of their concerns.

A project of this substance is not a solitary or singular effort. Several individuals besides the assigned seminary mentor and faculty advisors have given their input and encouragement. Context associates include the following ministers: Sheryl Roberts, Joseph Roberts, Bill von Husen, Evelyn von Husen, Anthony Benevento, Arthur Soto and Yolanda Soto. Of this group, Arthur Soto and Yolanda Soto provided insights into the culture of the Hispanic churches, as well as live translation for the teaching event as needed. Anthony Benevento has been exceptionally helpful in working out the logistics, attending every teaching session, and providing invaluable feedback. Lastly, Bobbie Jean Merck, a personal mentor and friend of the researcher, is an itinerant minister with at least forty years of experience. She continues to be instrumental in providing godly wisdom and prayer.

Professional associates are an invaluable source of knowledge and feedback. Suzanne Allen, Ph.D, D.Min., graduate of United Theological Seminary, pastor,

psychologist, and like-minded Spirit-filled believer, enhanced this project with her insight. As one who has completed all of the seminary requirements successfully and is a practicing psychologist, she was positioned to provide invaluable feedback. Kathleen Tajiri, M.D., has been ideal in providing expertise in the area of the effectiveness of touch in the context of alternative medicine and healing rooms. Jack Block, Ph.D, professor of historical methodology at William Paterson University, provided critical review, particularly but not exclusively, in the historical foundations of this project.

The peer associate is equally valuable for several reasons. The shared journey of struggles, learning, and accomplishments of the seminary experience from the first to the last day forms a bond of friendship that is immeasurable. Thomas Savastano agreed to serve in the role of peer associate for this project. In so doing, he provided clear understanding of the standards and requirements throughout the research process, followed the progress of this project from the onset, and shared insight and critical review.

Pre and Post-Teaching Observation

Prior to the teaching event, the observer tallied behaviors of leader and participants relative to the ritual of the laying on of hands during a typical worship service. The observer used a behavioral observation form (Appendix A). The same form was used at another service after the teaching event. This observation form indicates how, when, and by whom the laying on of hands was utilized in a typical service in both numerical and descriptive format. The number of times the laying on of hands was used

and by whom was tallied. Additionally, the difference before and after the teaching event, if any, was calculated, which provided a data source for indicators of change in praxis. The responses to the laying on of hands outlined on the observation form (reluctant, unfazed, affected) before and after the teaching event were also tallied and compared.

The observer also collected data about observable protocols that were used in the context, which are indicators of what is customary in the context. For the purposes of triangulation, the observation forms provided information about specific behaviors related to the laying on of hands that were not influenced by the researcher's teaching prior to the observation, and information about effective change after the teaching event. These protocol behaviors and changes in their implementation provided a window into the degree to which the participants embraced the teaching.

Questionnaires

The pre-teaching (Pre-T) questionnaire form (Appendices B and C) asked participants to identify their age, gender, church leadership roles, the frequency of individual and church practice of the laying on of hands, and the frequency of instruction about the doctrine of the laying on of hands. Items on the questionnaire asked participants about frequency of their practice, type of typical practice, effects upon recipients, how understanding has been acquired, and if any protocols or procedures are required for their participation in prayer with the laying on of hands. Congregants were asked to indicate and explain their preferences about whom they allow to lay hands upon them. Furthermore, they were asked to rate their perception of the importance of the laying on of hands in various contexts on a scale of one to five, one being the least important and

five being highly important. This indicates their opinions about the degree to which they value the practice and explains their own experiences in the role of both recipients and givers.

Understanding and opinions about the doctrine of the laying on of hands were evaluated by responses to statements using a five-point Likert rating scale (strongly agree, agree, disagree, strongly disagree, no opinion). These statements contain concepts keyed into the teaching materials. Some of the statements were intentionally designed to be in opposition to each other so that participants most likely to mark everything in the same category without carefully reading them would be spotted, and those responses would most likely be outliers. Statements on this section of the questionnaires (Appendix B in English and Appendix C in Spanish, question 13, statements A through L) comprise the following eight key teaching points, which also served as coding elements:

1. Laying on of hands is not a requirement to receive an impartation. (Statement A)
2. Hands are a transfer agent when imposed during prayer. (Statement B)
3. God is the source of impartations (imparting blessings, healing, commissions, empowerment, infilling of the Holy Spirit, spiritual gifts). (Statements C, H)
4. Impartations do not depend on the purity/holiness of the one imposing hands because God is the source. (Statement D)
5. Gifts are imparted as the Spirit wills (1 Cor. 12:11), not as people desire. (Statements C, H)
6. The New Testament gives Christians authority to lay on hands. (Statement E, G, I, J)
7. The doctrine of the laying on of hands should be taught. (Statement F)
8. Laying on of hands is an act of faith. (Statement K, L)

The questionnaires also provided space for additional thoughts, narrative explanations, or comments the participants chose to make.

The participants were asked to complete a post-teaching questionnaire (Post-T) with similar questions as the initial questionnaire to determine if any of their beliefs or

attitudes prior to the teaching event have either remained the same or changed as a result of the teaching event. Because the respondents for the Post-T are the same respondents within the Pre-T grouping, many of the background questions (other than age, gender, leadership identification) would be redundant, and therefore, eliminated on the Post-T questionnaire. Only the respondents' preferences, opinions/understandings, ratings of importance, and Post-T attitudes were elicited on the Post-T questionnaire. The post-T questionnaire also asks to self-identify opinions on the merits of the instruction with three criteria. The first asks if the respondents' understanding of the laying on of hands is the same, moderately deeper, or significantly deeper as prior to the teaching. The second criteria asks if the respondent is reluctant, more confident, or significantly confident in participating in the laying on of hands as a result of the teaching. Thirdly, the questionnaire asks if the respondents believe they have received something spiritual or not during the application phase of the teaching event. All questionnaires were available in both English and Spanish to accommodate language preference.

Teaching

Sources for content for teaching on the doctrine of the laying on of hands are primarily the biblical, theological, historical, and theoretical foundations of this project. The teaching approached the content by posing a series of questions and providing related information. For each teaching event, a handout containing the essential information was offered to the participants (Appendix E). Context associates received copies of this document in advance of the teaching event for prior approval and participants were also offered copies of this document upon completion of the teaching.

Application of the teaching involved prayer for impartation accompanied by the laying on of hands and included the encouragement of the participants to engage in laying hands on one another while praying. Time after the teaching was made available for any unanswered questions the congregation may have had or further discussion they may have desired.

Focus Group Discussion

Discussion gives participants an opportunity to respond in their own words and expand on their thinking. It also provides opportunity for the researcher to probe more deeply into the responses and seeks clarification of beliefs, attitudes, and opinions. The discussion is guided by questions related to the project, particularly questions that would evoke the capability of triangulating data with the questionnaire and observation sources. Examples of questions that prompted discussion are as follows:

- What has your experience with the laying on of hands been like before and/or after the teaching?
- Have any of your thoughts changed as a result of the teaching?
- What is the value, if any, in teaching about the doctrine of laying on of hands?
- What part of the teaching was most meaningful for you? For the group?
- Is there anything you would like to add to the conversation or make any suggestions?

The researcher conducted a focus group discussion within each church context (summaries of each group in Appendix D).

Analysis Methods

The analysis method for the questionnaires is a convergent parallel model in which numerical and narrative data is coded and compared, and then followed by

interpretation of patterns that emerge. Analysis of responses reveals information about the quality of understanding, frequency and quality of practice, and the degree of value respondents perceive. Information from the post-teaching questionnaire indicates whether or not change has taken place as a result of the teaching experience, and the analysis helps to formulate ideas for future study. The tabulated data are expressed in percentage (rounded, not truncated) and entered on tables (Appendix F), which reveal patterns and trends within each church context as well as a combined pool of data.

All participation was purely voluntary and information was elicited anonymously with the exception of the final focus group to support the credibility of responses. Participants of focus group discussions were required to give informed consent, which was verbal in the presence of all participants. Context associates (church leaders) previewed the questionnaire forms and instructional materials, as well as all subsequent information, analyses, and conclusions. Context demographics, particularly with bilingual materials and translators, were given purposeful consideration throughout.

Challenges

This study has presented some challenges. A predominantly Spanish-speaking congregation is the case in at least one of the churches; therefore, the project required the service of an interpreter during the teaching due to the researcher's limited fluency in Spanish. Also, as mentioned earlier, all of the questionnaire forms are available in both Spanish and English, which required some interpretation for analysis. Because the researcher worked within the schedules of the churches and their leadership's agenda, scheduling the components presented another challenge in that the turn-around time

between the pre-teaching questionnaire, teaching, and post-teaching questionnaire was designed to be within no more than three weeks.

Analysis and Interpretation of Data: Spirit and Life Word Ministries

The pre-teaching questionnaire (Pre-T) was administered at Spirit and Life Word Ministries on August 10, 2014; the teaching event occurred on August 10, 2014; and the post-teaching questionnaire (Post-T) was administered on August 24, 2014. Observations were noted on August 10 and August 24. A focus group discussion involving five members of the congregation was conducted on August 24, 2014.

SLWM Pre-T Background Data

Table F.1 provides data of self-described information that provides background information. The number of Post-T responses are significantly lower than the responses for the Pre-T. This is attributed to the fact that several of the people who attended during the Post-T were not present on the day of the teaching, and fewer were in attendance when the Post-T was administered.

According to both questionnaires, ages of participants generally hover within the two age ranges, between forty and sixty-nine, much like the leadership of the church. The balance of personal data is derived from the Pre-T, since the respondents on the Post-T are in the Pre-T pool, thereby making those questions redundant. A significant number of respondents identified themselves in church leadership positions (Table F.1, 33% among the pre-T group and 22% among the Post-T group) defined as persons serving in the following example positions: pastor, deacon, board member, worship leader, teacher, home group leader, department head.

A high percentage of respondents (86%) reported that the laying on of hands is frequently practiced in their church setting, and the remainder (14%) stated that it is occasionally done (Table F.1). None of them reported the laying on of hands (LoH) occurring either rarely or never. This data is verified by the pre and post-observations, as well as the focus group discussion (Appendix D). Related to the regular practice of LoH, 86% of the respondents also reported that LoH is taught either frequently or occasionally. Both of these responses indicate that the congregation is familiar with the practice of LoH on a regular basis, but familiarity does not necessarily reveal understanding. Other sections on the questionnaire targeted this issue.

In terms of the respondents' perception of teaching on the subject of LoH, approximately 2/3 respondents indicate frequent teaching, and nearly all of the remainder responses indicate occasionally teaching on the subject (some exceptions exist). This seems to conflict with the disparity of opinions and understandings suggested in the subsequent questions on the Pre-T. It also conflicts with the question on how their understanding on LoH was acquired. The majority report having read about it and having drawn conclusions or having had it mentioned in a sermon. A possible explanation of the conflicting response is how the respondents interpret "teaching." They may view teaching as praxis or casual mention rather than direct instruction. The focus group discussion revealed that the participants saw a need and expressed appreciation for direct instruction.

SLWM Pre-T Respondents' Experiences

The Pre-T asked respondents about their personal experiences with LoH, or lack thereof (Table F.2). First it asked about their experiences having hands imposed upon

them in various contexts, and then about their experiences when they had imposed hands upon others. All of the participants claimed to have had hands imposed upon them in various contexts, the highest percentages being for blessing (95%), healing (95%), impartation of spiritual gifts (86%), and infilling of the Holy Spirit (67%).

These contexts correspond with their experiences when they have, in turn, imposed hands upon other. Ordination, commissioning, and sacramental contexts are the least frequent, which seems understandable in that most people see these contexts relegated to clergy use. Healing is the most frequent reason for the respondents to pray and lay hands upon others. The frequency of their participation seems to align with the purposes they reported, that being frequently (19%) and occasionally (57%). Opportunities to pray for the sick or blessing tend to have a higher frequency than other contexts, as the percentage of their typical practice indicates.

SLWM Comparison of Preferences

Question about preferences are focused on the respondents' inclinations about whom they seek or allow imposition of hands on themselves Pre-T and Post-T. The content of the teaching event discusses this issue and the findings show some change in attitude, perhaps based on new understandings. The results (Table F.3) show an overall greater preference, particularly toward known church leaders and refraining from unfamiliar people. Prohibiting people in non-church settings to impose hands upon them also increased.

A few members of the focus group brought up this issue as a critical point during the focus group discussion. They expressed concerns about spiritualist syncretism based

on their past experiences and the dangers of inviting the possibility of demonic activity when allowing non-believers to pray and lay hands upon someone. They agreed that permitting non-believers to lay hands and invoke some type of spiritual activities in a non-Christian context is unwise.

SLWM Comparison of Opinions/Understandings

The teaching had the greatest effect on the participants' understanding and resulting opinions, and this is shown by the shift of percentages in each of the twelve statements on the questionnaires. Overwhelmingly, the participants had significant positive changes in understanding and opinions corresponding to the eight coding elements after the teaching (Table F.4). Statement H (Appendix B), however, presented mixed results. It states, "People who desire a specific gift can receive it by having persons who have that gift lay hands on them." Of those who responded, no significant change occurred in percentages with those who agree or strongly agree, fewer disagreed, and those who strongly disagree or those who do not know or are unsure increased. These mixed results may indicate one of a few possibilities. The statement may not have been clear enough for the participants. The topic may be something new and warrants more discussion, or the participants may be convinced of the statement as written. Whatever the case may be, it is recommended that future discussion on this issue should be made to provide better clarity.

The pre and post-teaching observations and focus group discussion verify the results of this section. In the second observation, it was apparent that the congregation was keenly aware of the laying on of hands and its practice during the service. The

responses of the recipients of prayer with the laying on of hands had no indication of reticence, and those who were asked to lay hands on other did so without hesitation. Furthermore, testimonies during the service and discussion among focus group members attest to the participants' deeper understanding (Appendix D).

SLWM Post-T Attitudes

Of particular concern for this project is the whether or not the teaching evoked a positive change in the attitudes of the participants. On three criteria, Table F.6 indicates that a significant positive impact was made on all three. 79% of those who responded indicate that they have either moderately or significantly deepened their understanding as a result of the teaching, as well as 79% willing to participate in the laying on of hands in the future. A remarkable 100% believe that they had received an impartation during the application phase of the teaching event. Both pre and post-teaching observations and statements of the focus group members (Appendix D) affirm the same results for all three criteria.

Analysis and Interpretation of Data: Heaven's Gate Christian Fellowship

The pre-teaching questionnaire (Pre-T) was administered at Heaven's Gate Christian Fellowship on September 7, 2014. The teaching event occurred on September 7, 2014; and the post-teaching questionnaire (Post-T) was administered on September 14, 2014. Observations were noted on August 31, 2014, and September 14, 2014, although the researcher has had frequent opportunities for observation since January 2012. A focus

group discussion with five members of the congregation was conducted on September 14, 2014.

HGCF Pre-T Background Data

Table F.7 provides data of self-described information that provides background information. The number of Post-T responses are somewhat lower than the responses for the Pre-T. This is attributed to the fact that some of the people who attended during the Post-T service were not present on the day of the teaching or simply did not respond to the post-T questionnaire.

Both the Pre-T and the Post-T indicate a substantial mix of male and female respondents. The majority of respondents fall in the age range of twenty-five to fifty-four years old, which corresponds to the age of the church leaders. An unusually high number of respondents self-identified themselves as church leaders, defined with the following examples: pastor, deacon, board member, worship leader, teacher, home group leader, department head. This may indicate a high percentage of participation in church activity.

In terms of the perceptions of respondents regarding the practice of the laying on of hands in their church (Table F.7), 91% report that the laying on of hands is either occasionally (35%) or frequently (56%) practiced. In addition, 64% indicate that the laying on of hands is taught occasionally (32%) or frequently (32%); however the approximately one-third remaining report that it is rarely or never taught, which seems to be a significant disparity of opinion. To account for this disparity, one can offer some possibilities that include misinterpretation of the concept of teaching; confusing teaching

with practice; interpreting teaching with casual mention; or not be present if teaching actually did occur.

The self-described source of respondents' knowledge about the laying on of hands seems to offer a better picture of how they acquired their knowledge. Only 18% claimed that it has been mentioned in a sermon, and 26% claimed to have had instruction in a Bible study or Sunday school setting. Furthermore, the greatest numbers of respondents (41%) reported to have read it in the Bible and drew conclusions for themselves. These data are clearly in contradiction to the 64% claim of the church's teaching on the ritual. Very few (6%) claim to even have had discussion about this topic. These data are significant in discovering and drawing conclusions about any changes as a result of the teaching event.

HGCF Pre-T Respondents' Experiences

Self-described contexts in which respondents have experienced the laying on of hands as recipients (Table F.8) seem to be very diverse, with the greatest percentage for blessing (82%), which is a general category offering broad interpretation. Infilling of the Holy Spirit (65%) is also a significant amount. This seems quite plausible due to the common practice among Pentecostals and Charismatics to lay hands on those seeking to receive a baptism of the Holy Spirit. The fewest number (15%) is for ordination, which also seems reasonable because ordination is generally relegated to sacerdotal functions of clergy.

Participation in laying hands on others seems to parallel their recipient experiences fairly closely. Blessing (62%) and healing (53%) are the most frequent

contexts in which the respondents had engaged in the laying on of hands upon others while praying for others. A majority of 59% claimed to having engaged in the practice either occasionally or frequently and only 3% stated that they had never participated in the practice. These data are verified by observations wherein the congregants seems very comfortable with having hands imposed upon them during prayer, and also laying on hands while they pray for others. The researcher observed no reluctance among any of those seeking prayer or those engaging in prayer for others.

HGCF Comparison of Preferences

Pre-T and Post-T data comparisons show expected change on the remainder questions based on the intervention of the teaching event. Preference about who respondents would allow to impose hands upon them shows a significant change when asked if they have no preference. Table F.9 indicates that 50% of the respondents initially stated they had no preference as to who they would allow to lays hands on them before the teaching, and 0% of the respondents indicated a “no” on the Post-T. This indicates that based on the teaching, the respondents are 100% more selective.

The explanatory narratives indicate that their response refers to their concern about unfamiliar people who may not be Christian or who may carry unholy spiritual influence and thereby imparting something that have potentially problematic. Their preferences are strong for ministers and church members with whom they have relationship, which is apparently an issue of trust. Their preferences in non-church settings are very similar, that is, 79% are not comfortable with people laying hands on them in non-church settings (i.e. alternative medicine therapies).

A substantial amount of time spent on this topic during the focus group discussion verifies this finding. Several members of the discussion group described experiences of ministerial abuse and wrong intentions when imposition of hands were involved (Appendix D). Both Pre-T and Post-T observations verify that church members are comfortable with their present church leadership and membership imposing hands. It is apparent that the congregation feels safe and trusts one another in their current church setting. Regular practices no doubt account for the sense of trust and safety at HGCF among congregants who report past perceived abuses in other contexts.

HGCF Comparison of Opinions/Understandings

Table F.10 reveals the differences between the opinions and understandings of the respondents prior to and after the teaching event at HGCF. The results of the Post-T opinions and understandings show that in each of the eight key concepts, the responses showed increase in the “strongly agree” and “agree” rating, and showed decrease in disagreement. Statement K, which states, “The only purpose of the laying on of hands is to communicate affirmation, encouragement, or compassion,” is one of the contradictory statements to identify outliers. For this statement, respondents showed an increase in agreement and considerable decrease in disagreement. This conflicts with both the teaching and statements B and C. In accounting for this anomaly, the meaning and implications of the statement relies heavily on the word “only,” and could easily have been glossed over. If the word is missed, the meaning shifts dramatically.

Table F.11, which shows results of respondents rating the importance of the laying on of hands in various contexts shows very little difference between Pre-T and

Post-T. In each of the two questionnaires, respondents overwhelmingly value the laying on of hands in every context. It would seem incongruent, therefore, if Post-T results had shown any change.

HGCF Post-T Attitudes

Three criteria are used to question attitudinal change as a result of the teaching. The first asked participants if their understanding of impartation with the laying on of hands is the same, moderately deepened, or significantly deepened (Table F.12). Of the respondents, 95% reported that their understanding either moderately or significantly deepened. The second criteria is their self-described increase in confidence to participate in the laying on of hands as a result of the teaching, and 77% indicated either moderately or significantly more confident. Finally, the third asked if they have received something during the impartation phase of the teaching, and 77% acknowledged that they did.

In terms of triangulating the data with the observations, questionnaires, and focus groups, the data have a very high correlation. The ease and apparent comfort level of both those who pray and those who received prayer with the laying on of hands observed during services affirm the general acceptance of the veracity and efficacy of the practice. The questionnaires clearly show positive movement in terms of the effectiveness of teaching, and all of the members of the focus group agreed that the teaching was both valuable and effective. The focus group discussion gave participants opportunity to express their experiences and concerns, which largely centered on ministerial abuses as well as revealing the need for teaching in the area of spiritual influences, particularly demonic influence. Appropriate protocols for the possibility for negative spiritual

influences and deliverance ministry are touched upon in the teaching event, but they are not fully developed as these are tangential and not the specific focus of the study. As a related area, however, it has potential for future investigation and development.

These results are particularly critical to verifying the hypothesis of the study. The numerical and narrative data show significant positive outcomes as a result of teaching. These include positive attitudes about participation as well as deeper knowledge and understanding of core concepts.

Analysis and Interpretation of Data: Summit Church

The pre-teaching questionnaire (Pre-T) was administered at Summit Church on September 21, 2014. The teaching event occurred on September 28, 2014; and the post-teaching questionnaire (Post-T) was administered on October 12, 2014. Observations were noted on September 21, 2014, and October 14, 2014, although the researcher has had frequent opportunities for observation over the past five years. A focus group discussion with eight members of the congregation was conducted on October 12, 2014.

SC Pre-T Background Data

The responder of both the Pre-T and Post-T questionnaires were fairly evenly distributed in terms of gender (Table F.13). Although the 25–39 age bracket, most likely parents of the children in the church, accounted for more than others, the group had representation from all of the age groups. About one-third of the congregation identified itself as leaders, which includes administrative and teaching positions, besides such identifiers as board members, deacons, and elders.

SC Pre-T Respondents' Experiences

Overall agreement indicates that the church either frequently or occasionally practices the laying on of hands (95%). Both the Pre-T and Post-T observations verify this data. The respondents' perception of church practices, teaching on the laying on of hands, and protocols for the ritual, however, show some contradictory results (Table F.13). For example, 74% stated that the church teaches LoH doctrine, but only 40% indicated that it is mentioned in a sermon or teaching. Furthermore, 50% indicate that they have seen it practiced and drew their own conclusions. The disparity of data seems to indicate a lack of clarity about what constitutes teaching on a doctrine. This issue arose in the forum discussion, where group members indicated that they had not received any formal teaching on the topic, and that they had some confusion prior to the teaching event.

In terms of the respondents individual Pre-T experiences (Table F.14), 79% had experienced LoH for blessing, 74% had experienced LoH for healing (74%), and 55% had experienced LoH for infilling of the Holy Spirit. These three contexts are the most common of the nine listed. Ordination and commissioning are the least of identified contexts, which seems reasonable since these occasions are not frequent. The results of the respondents' participation of LoH parallels their own experiences, as indicated by 14% stating they participate frequently and 43% state that they participate occasionally.

SC Comparison of Preferences

From examining the data on Table F.15, it is apparent that the congregants generally trust people indiscriminately. On the Pre-T questionnaire, 48% stated that they

have no preferences as to who lays hands on them. As to those who had preferences, 19% for any clergy, 26% for guest ministers, and 33% for church leaders. A dramatic shift occurred on the Post-T questionnaire. Of those who had preferences, 42% indicated clergy, 50% for guest ministers, 47% for church leaders. The ones who had no preferences dropped by 6%.

More dramatically, 76% first indicated they would allow unfamiliar people to lay hands on them, and after the teaching, the figure dropped to 21%. Furthermore, on the Pre-T questionnaire concerning having hands imposed outside of church settings showed similar shift. At first, 51% stated they would allow this, but on the Post-T, it dropped to 34%. Those who originally stated they would not allow LoH outside of church settings was 40%, but the Post-T increased that to 66%. Awareness of abuses and non-Christian spiritual contexts and effects as part of the teaching most likely accounts for the shift.

SC Comparison of Opinions/Understandings

Opinions are formed based on the understanding of knowledge, which has the potential of change when new information or knowledge is received and processed. On Table F.16, the data show that respondents modified some of their original views as a result of the teaching event. Respondents showed some increase in agreement with the importance of the laying on of hands (total increase of 20%) and that hands are a transfer agent for impartation (total increase of 10%). They also increased their agreement (increase of 10% on strong agreement) that the doctrine should be taught.

A notable change is on their opinion about non-Christians LoH having no effect (statement J), showing Strong agreement decreased 9%, Strong disagreement increased

by 13%, disagreement increased by 9%. Another notable shift is statement H, which states, “People who desire a specific spiritual gift can receive it by having persons who have that gift lay hands on them.” The statement, as expressed, implies that the impartation of gifts is transferred from person to person originating with the gifted person, not God. The teaching refutes this idea and most likely affected a change in opinion.

Table F.17 notes opinions on the importance of the laying on of hands in various church and Christian-life related contexts. In each context, respondents dramatically increased the ratings to four and five out of a possible five, where five is highly important. In the focus group discussion, a few respondents stated that they were not previously aware of the many contexts for the laying on of hands, and this new awareness may have prompted the high rate of increase.

SC Post-T Attitudes

One of the targeted goals of the teaching is increase knowledge and thereby, to encourage more participation on the part of individuals to pray for others with the laying on of hands. This appears to be a considerable need as expressed in the Pre-T questionnaire where 26% indicated that they either rarely or never participate in prayer with the laying on of hands. The focus group members were approximately divided among some who regularly practice LoH with prayer and some who rarely or never had done so prior to the teaching.

The Pre-T as well as Post-T observations indicate that church leaders primarily do the praying with LoH within the church service context. Within the context of a church

service, it is not unreasonable for the church leaders to take the initiative to pray and lay hands on people, and some may feel that they may be usurping protocols by stepping into that role. To the leadership's credit, however, during both observations, the pastor did invite the church members to join in praying for people, but few did so. If this is a desirable behavior, it may require more repeated and directed encouragement. Nevertheless, 82% indicated that they would be more confident (64%) or significantly more confident (18%) to personally participate in praying for people with the laying on of hands (Table F.18). Furthermore, 90% indicated their belief that they have received something when prayed for and having hands imposed. It is very apparent that faith for impartations appears to be the norm.

Understanding of impartation after the teaching event also showed increase. 63% indicated that they have moderately or significantly deepened their understanding of the doctrine of impartation with the laying on of hands after the teaching. The focus group discussion supports this data (Appendix D).

Analysis and Interpretation of Combined Data

The data tallies from the three churches were combined to form a singular data pool. The purpose of combining all of the data was to determine if there were overall patterns or trends that may inform some generalized conclusions. The six combined data tables showing the percentages for the same overall categories as the individual churches are in Appendix F (Table F.19; Table F.20; Table F.21; Table F.22; Table F.23; Table F.24).

Combined Pre-T Background Data

The basic demographic data for age and gender is fairly evenly distributed with representation from each group (Table F.19). Nearly half of the total pool self-identified as church leaders, which includes pastors, elders, board members, teachers, administrators, and department heads. This would indicate that the congregants who regularly attend the churches are also involved in their church ministries. A large percentage (85%) stated that their church practices the laying on of hands either frequently or occasionally. An overwhelming 73% indicated that their church teaches on the laying on of hands; however, this conflicts with only 38% stating that it is mentioned in sermons or teaching, and only 35% indicated that they were taught about it in a Bible study or Sunday School. It would seem that the congregants misinterpret seeing something practiced with direct teaching on it. The broad range of dissimilar and contrasting responses on the Pre-T questionnaire indicates that unified doctrinal understanding was missing.

Combined Pre-T Respondents' Experiences

In terms of the participants' personal experiences (Table F.20) of having hands imposed prior to the teaching, the highest frequency was for blessing (83%), healing (68%), and infilling of the Holy Spirit (61%). Their experiences in praying for others with LoH is similar in blessing (64%) and healing (61%), but infilling of the Holy Spirit only 27%. Other contexts showed lower percentages. Two possible conclusions can be drawn from these data. Either the congregants did not have knowledge of other contexts

(ordination, commissioning, sacraments, impartation of spiritual gifts, empowerment for service), or they did not understand that all believers may participate in those contexts.

Combined Comparison of Preferences

The comparison between Pre-T and Post-T on Table F.21 showing the respondents' preferences of who they allow to impose hands on them shows significant positive change in nearly every category. These results point to a new awareness and discernment between Christian and non-Christian imposition of hands and their effects. Additionally, a significant drop in allowing unfamiliar people to impose hands (decrease of 24%) or to have unfamiliar people in non-church settings impose hands (12% change) supports the same concept. These settings would include biofield energy therapies such as Therapeutic Touch and Reiki.

Combined Comparison of Opinions/Understandings

Three statements showed notable change (>10%) on Table F.22 that was specifically addressed in the teaching. Statement A gives contexts for the laying on of hands and the reduction of 15% in the “disagree” category indicates that fewer respondents see the laying on of hands as unnecessary. Statement C, which states, “God is the source of all impartations,” shows a shift from strongly agree (decrease of 10%) to agree (increase of 14%). With the consideration of negative spiritual impartations with non-Christian contexts in the teaching, respondents may have given the statement second thought with the word “all,” which would be completely inclusive of all spiritual activity. Statement G, “All Christians have authority to lay hands on people,” showed a total

agreement increase of 15%, which indicates that more respondents made personal connections to the inclusion of all believers. Table F.23 shows an increase (>10%) on each of the contexts where respondents were asked to rate the importance of imposition of hands in various contexts.

Combined Post-T Attitudes

The three questions on the Post-T questionnaire are summative and are most significant to the outcome of the project as a whole (Table F.24). First of all, a total of 78% of the respondents indicated that they have either moderately or significantly deepened their understanding of the doctrine of the laying on of hands. Secondly, the respondents stated that they felt either more confident or significantly confident (total of 89%) in willingness to participate in prayer with the laying on of hands. Finally, 87% of the respondents state they believed they had received something during prayer and imposition of hands. The outcome of these three questions validate the original hypothesis that the teaching on the doctrine of the laying on of hands increases knowledge and understanding of the doctrine, and encourages greater willingness to participate in the practice.

Conclusions

Empirical application of research has defined the field experience, from project design to implementation, and finally, to analysis and interpretation. As a result, several questions were under consideration. What does the field experience say about the subject

of inquiry? Does it authenticate or disprove anything? More importantly, does it make a positive difference in the lives of the people involved in the project?

The hypothesis of the project is the outcome of premises, assumptions, and deductions drawn from observations and discussions over a long period of time, as well as concern for believers to fully have what God has provided in His word for their lives in Christ. The hypothesis of this project claims that with teaching on the doctrine of the laying on of hands for impartation, individuals will increase in their knowledge and understanding, as well as become more willing and confident in participating in the practice. The field experience and ensuing data has clearly shown that this hypothesis is valid in both areas.

Disaggregating the data by the three context venues and by themes, then entering tallies onto tables, facilitated analysis and interpretation of data. Trends and significant changes were noted and interpreted. Subsequently viewing the data as a combined pool has corroborated the individual context data. Data from the observations and the focus group discussions have added insight and support for the findings on the data tables.

Outcomes of the field experience have shown increase of understanding on all of the eight key points about the doctrine of the laying on of hands previously mentioned. Furthermore, the results have shown a dramatic increase in self-described understanding of impartation as a whole, willingness to personally participate in prayer with the laying on of hands, and belief that something is received from God during prayer and imposition of hands. The different data collection methodologies in triangulation have corroborated and verified these results.

Reflections

With the exception of the verb form in some translations of Romans 1:11, the word “impartation” is not found in Scripture, just as words like Sunday School, mysticism, church boards, and missionary are also not specifically found in Scripture. Nevertheless, biblical texts, church tradition, and theological grounding support the conceptual meaning and use of these words in church life. Impartation, as is a commonly used term in current Third Wave (Neo-Charismatic) circles, is relatively new to Pentecostal and Charismatic history. Earlier groups were more likely to refer to the experience of impartation with words like visitation, blessing, baptism, filling, and encounter. Regardless of the term used, the concept is that the believer experiences God in a personal way different from the usual activities of prayer and worship, which enjoys ample biblical support.

In Hebrews 6:2, the writer of Hebrews specifically describes the laying on of hands as an elementary doctrine. Although the word “impartation” is not listed as an elementary doctrine in Hebrews 6:2, impartation is inseparable from the laying on of hands doctrine. Impartation is the underlying reason for the practice when hands are imposed whether it is for blessing, sacramental impartation, empowerment, infilling, or healing. It is the release of the intended purpose to facilitate the transference of the anticipated blessing.

Impartation can occur without imposition of hands, but the laying on of hands serves God’s purpose when it does occur, even if viewed as nothing more than symbolic

of the transference.³⁶⁹ The laying on of hands is the physical action that involves humans interacting with each other, and the impartation is the spiritual action that involves the Holy Spirit interacting with humans at the same time. One may view this as an effective three-way participation among God, the person imposing hands, and the recipient.

New Testament examples of the impartation of blessing, healing, and spiritual gifts in the life of Jesus and the apostles are numerous. For Christians, the words, deeds, and instructions of Jesus and the Apostles under the inspiration of the Holy Spirit are paramount. Several events in the ministry of Jesus give examples of where Jesus imposed His hands to bless people or heal the sick (see Table 3.2, Historical Foundation). Disciples, by the nature of the teacher-learner relationship, follow the life examples and words of their master and teacher. Jesus' injunctions of Mark 16:15–18 that include the imposition of hands that were given just prior to the Ascension were not simply parting words of suggestion. They have clarity and intentionality to be taken seriously and literally.

Jesus not only gave a directive to lay hands on the sick, He provides spiritual authority to do so. Matthew 28:18 (NASB) states, “All authority has been given to Me in heaven and on earth.” This proclaims authority in both physical and spiritual realms. Therefore, when Jesus says, “In My name” in Mark 16, He is telling His followers that whatever authority He has is available to His followers. The authority to do what He has

³⁶⁹ Johannes Behm, *Die Handauflegung im Urchristentum: Nach Verwendung*, (Leipzig, DE: Herkunft und Bedeutung in religionsgeschichte Zusammenhand untersucht, 1911). Behm's study focuses on the effectiveness of the laying on of hands as symbolic of transference, particularly in early Christianity. P.A. Elderenbosch, in *De Oplegging der Handen*, (The Hague, NL: Boencentrum, 1953) also examines the laying on of hands in biblical literature, particularly in early church praxis. Rudolph González, in his dissertation, “Laying on of Hands in Luke and Acts: Theology, Ritual, and Interpretation,” (PhD diss., Baylor University, 1999), acknowledges Jewish influence on the Christian practice of the laying on of hands, but posits that it should be viewed as distinctly Christian in light of the messianic context of the early church.

directed is not innate in humanity, but rather is dependent upon belief in Him, the invocation of His name, and the relationship of believers as belonging to Him.

Dietrich Bonhoeffer's simple yet profound words reiterate the relationship of the authority of Jesus with His followers. He states that our mission as followers of Jesus points, "toward Christ, toward the Lord, toward the Word of God, which is beyond all our words, which God speaks at any time and in any place, touches and enters human hearts and brings fear and comfort to them, whenever and wherever God wants."³⁷⁰ As this project has shown, Scripture and history reveal that the New Testament Apostles, subsequent leaders in the patristic period, and Christians within the broad sweep of denominations throughout the ages have followed the words of the Master.

The empowerment to do all that Jesus commissioned believers to do, however, is the domain of the Holy Spirit. From the time the Apostles received the Holy Spirit (John 20:22) and then received the empowerment on the day of Pentecost (Acts 2:1–4), to the present day, the Holy Spirit empowers believers through divine impartation in many ways, one of which is through the agency of the laying on of hands. The Holy Spirit imparts spiritual gifts necessary for leadership in the Church and for Kingdom living for all believers. As David Clayton Robinson's dissertation on "handlaying" (Robinson's nomenclature) emphasizes, the laying on of hands is not an empty gesture, but rather it is always intended for blessing within an overarching concept of transference.³⁷¹ He states, "It seems that in most cases where the NT church practiced handlaying, something

³⁷⁰ Dietrich Bonhoeffer, *The Collected Sermons of Dietrich Bonhoeffer*, translated by Douglas W. Stott, Anne Schmidt-Lange, Isabel Best, Scott A. Moore, Claudia D. Bergmann, edited by Isabel Best (Minneapolis, MN: Fortress Press, 2012), 90.

³⁷¹ David Clayton Robinson, "The Laying on of Hands, with Special Reference to the Reception of the Holy Spirit in the New Testament," (PhD diss., Fuller Theological Seminary, 2008), 280.

observable was expected to take place.”³⁷² This expectation may include tongues and prophecy, healing, empowerment for service and leadership, and impartation of *charismata*. Furthermore, no scriptural indication for the cessation of this expectation from the early Church era into contemporary times exists.

Kingdom of God imperatives include preaching the gospel, making disciples of all nations, healing the sick, visiting the imprisoned, taking care of the orphan and widow, setting captives free from strongholds, feeding the hungry, and equipping the saints (believers in Christ) to do the work of the ministry. The empowerment for these works comes from God, the Giver of divine gifts. Specific gifts of the Holy Spirit mentioned in Scripture include prophecy, word of knowledge, word of wisdom, speaking in tongues, interpretation of tongues, faith, effecting of miracles, gifts of healing, discerning of spirits (1 Cor. 12:4–11). In addition, the Holy Spirit gives gifts to serve the church that include apostles, prophets, teachers, evangelists, pastors, and administrations (Eph. 4:11; 1 Cor. 12:28). Furthermore, God is not confined to only these gifts that are mentioned. God’s graces and blessings are beyond human calculation.

Based on Scripture, however, the impartation of the Holy Spirit and all the He gives to believers—divine visitations, spiritual gifts, healing, empowerment—can be transmitted with or without the laying on of hands. What, then, is the point of the laying on of hands? Acts 8:28 (NASB) states, “Now when Simon saw that the Spirit was bestowed through the laying on of the apostles’ hands, he offered them money.” The preposition “through” (*dia* in Greek) in Acts 8:28 points to the crux of the matter. It clearly indicates that human hands act as a transfer agent when hands are imposed for

³⁷² Robinson, 280.

receiving an impartation from God. God, by virtue of being God, does act according to His sovereign will, but God has also given humans the blessing of participating in His giving through prayer and the laying on of hands. Three episodes, also in Acts, involve the laying on of hands for impartation of different things, these being the reception of the Holy Spirit, healing, and supernatural gifts. In Acts 8:14-17, Peter and John ministered to the Samaritans and they received the Holy Spirit as Peter and John were laying on hands. Ananias ministered to Saul (Paul) with the laying on of hands for healing and infilling of the Holy Spirit. Paul laid hands on the Ephesians, after which they spoke in tongues and prophesied (Acts 19:6). These episodes among others affirm the role believers have in God's divine plan for the Church.

The impartations are gifts of God that cannot be earned (Gal. 3:2–5) or bought (Acts 8:18–24). They are received by faith (Gal. 3:2); however, there seem to be some human attitudes and behaviors that are repeatedly evident when impartations occur. These include prayer, obedience, expectancy and surrender. In each case of impartations through the laying on of hands exemplified in Scripture, obedient prayer is the accompanying action. The 120 in the Upper Room in Jerusalem obeyed and prayed as they waited for the Pentecostal experience; Paul obeyed in going to Damascus, and Ananias both obeyed and prayed for Paul's healing and infilling; Cornelius and Peter obeyed and prayed in the Caesarea episode. All of the episodes of the laying on of hands also exemplified expectancy of God doing something with no human manipulation, and surrender by the recipient to that which God is imparting.

Furthermore, the laying on of hands is not limited to clergy. This faith act belongs to the entire Body of Christ, not just a select few. At the heart of impartation, whether

hands are imposed or not, is that God, the divine extravagant Giver of gifts, imparts His gifts to His people for His purposes. How and when God's gifts are imparted are in God's domain (1 Cor. 12:11) and believers are at times privileged to be used as conduits of blessing for impartations with prayer and the laying on of hands. These times are not confined to ecclesial settings. They certainly may be seen in the context of sacramental ceremonies, but they may also be exercised beyond church walls into the outer community as believers pray for strangers to be healed and touched by God. Personal experiences and observations, as well as the accounts of the lives of past and present Christian leaders, have shown that the Holy Spirit responds to people who are hungry for His presence and empowerment both inside and outside of the church building.

Ultimately, one might ask why understanding the ritual of the laying on of hands for impartation really matters. Can impartation occur without understanding or without the involvement of other individuals? Certainly God imparts whatever He chooses to whomever and in any manner He deems appropriate with or without human knowledge. Paul had two impartations using different modalities without benefit of New Testament doctrine, which was not yet formed. He encountered God on a road to Damascus (Acts 9:3–8) without the laying on of hands, but then had another encounter when Ananias imposed hands on him for healing and infilling of the Spirit (Acts 9:17–18). Ananias' obedience had significance in the laying on of hands and his participation was a transfer agent of that second impartation. Paul, as a religious practicing Jew, would have known about the ritual in Old Testament contexts, and should have been able to apply understanding in New Testament circumstances, but his understanding did not seem to matter at that juncture as the sovereignty of God was in operation.

In contrast, Christians in the modern world have the benefit of the written Word of God, whereby teaching and example is available to grow in grace and truth. Teaching the foundational doctrines of the faith, both elementary and complex, provide the necessary grounding to live life as God intended for His people. Knowledge and understanding helps the believer make better choices to participate in God's plans and avoid unnecessary spiritual difficulties, particularly about unwittingly participating in non-Christian rituals that may lead to demonic experiences (see Theological and Theoretical Foundations). Knowledge and understanding builds expectancy when coupled with faith and obedience.

Ability to Be Replicated and Future Study

The materials including the observation forms, questionnaires, and teaching handouts are all reproducible with permission and proper citation. This project makes no claims or guarantees for standard statistical reliability due to the larger number of participants required for standard statistical reliability. Data tabulation, coding, and analysis procedures are described and evident in the project. Therefore, replicating the process and procedures of this project are straightforward, making the possibility of replication uncomplicated.

Future studies may investigate the long-term participant retention of teaching. Another study may investigate whether the instruction becomes turnkey instruction as given, or if the original teaching is modified in some way with a rationale for modifications. A broader project might study whether or not such factors as Christian traditions or cultural homogeneity or heterogeneity within a congregation influence

attitudes and understanding, thereby requiring modification in the teaching of doctrine to accommodate cultural elements.

Final Words

It is vitally important for the Church to avoid the kind of ambiguity that leads to confusion and assumptions that may be far from biblical truth. Teaching the “elementary doctrines” (Heb. 6:2), of which the laying on of hands is named, better equips congregants in discernment. Understanding brings clarity to occasions when God visits His people in personal ways and helps one discern the authentic move of God from that which is not authentic. Understanding of ritual helps the congregation connect to sacramental ceremony in communal agreement for blessing. Furthermore, knowledge and understanding of God’s Word using sound hermeneutic principles about a doctrine helps believers develop a deeper appreciation of God’s ways. It also develops confidence and greater willingness to participate in that which God offers to His children. Therefore, a better question would ask why believers would not want to participate with the Holy Spirit in blessing, restoration, encouragement, and empowerment for one another, especially because Scripture supports it so thoroughly. Simply stated, touch for supernatural impartation is given and received as divine love in action.

APPENDIX A
OBSERVATION FORM

Observation Form

Name of Group/Context: _____

Date of Observation: _____ Number of Participants: _____

Observer(s): _____

Leadership role:

- _____ Asks congregation members to extend hands
- _____ Asks designated individuals to pray and lay hands on people
- _____ Asks congregation in general to pray and lay hands on people

Role of person(s) praying and imposing hands on others

- _____ Number of people praying and laying hands on others
- _____ Number of people extending hands toward person being prayed for

Role of person(s) receiving prayer and imposition of hands

- _____ Number of people having hands imposed by preacher/speaker
- _____ Number of people having hands imposed by a designated person
- _____ Number of people having hands imposed by congregants in general

Responses of people who have hands imposed

- _____ Number of people who appear to be reluctant to have hands imposed
- _____ Number of people who appear to unfazed by hands imposed
- _____ Number of people who appear to be affected by hands imposed

Additional notes on responses (Continue on back if needed)

Indicators of rules and/or procedures (F= frequently, S=Sporadically, N=Not at all)

- _____ Gender assignations (men pray with men, women pray with women)
- _____ Mixed gender praying for each other with laying on of hands
- _____ Gender related protocols for laying on hands for healing apparent
- _____ Laying on hands on affected area for healing
- _____ Laying on hands for impartation
 - _____ Head
 - _____ Hands
 - _____ Shoulders
 - _____ Other
 - _____ Oil accompanied with laying on of hands

Notes/Other observations:

APPENDIX B

PRE AND POST-TEACHING QUESTIONNAIRES IN ENGLISH

The following survey is about your experience with the laying on of hands.
Please **do not write your name** on any of the pages.

1. Gender : _____ Male _____ Female

2. Age: Please check which applies.

_____ Under 18
 _____ 18–24
 _____ 25–39
 _____ 40–54
 _____ 55–69
 _____ 70+

3. Church Leader (Examples: pastor, deacon, board member, worship leader, teacher, home group leader, department head, etc.):

_____ Yes _____ No

4. Does the church/Christian group you regularly attend practice the laying on of hands?

_____ Frequently _____ Occasionally _____ Rarely _____ Never

5. Does the church/Christian group where you regularly attend provide teaching about the laying on of hands?

_____ Frequently _____ Occasionally _____ Rarely _____ Never

6. Have you experienced the laying on of hands on you? _____ Yes _____ No
 If yes, check all that apply.

_____ Blessing
 _____ Ordination
 _____ Commissioning
 _____ Sacraments (Examples: Baptism, Confirmation)
 _____ Healing
 _____ Infilling of the Holy Spirit
 _____ Impartation of Spiritual Gifts
 _____ Empowerment for Service
 _____ Other _____

If you would like to share the effect of any of these experiences, please explain on the lines in number 14 of this survey.

7. Have you participated in the laying on of hands on others? _____ Yes _____ No
If no, go to number 8. If yes, check all contexts that apply.

_____ Blessing
_____ Ordination
_____ Commissioning
_____ Sacraments (Examples: Baptism, Confirmation)
_____ Healing
_____ Infilling of the Holy Spirit
_____ Impartation of Spiritual Gifts
_____ Empowerment for Service
_____ Other: _____

How frequently?

_____ Frequently _____ Occasionally _____ Rarely _____ Never

- 7a. When you lay hands upon others when you pray for them, what is your typical practice? Check all that apply.

_____ As part of church leadership functions
_____ Only when asked to do so by church leaders
_____ Almost always. It is a regular part of prayer for others.
_____ Only for healing.
_____ For all kinds of prayer.

- 7b. How did you acquire your understanding about the laying on of hands for impartation? Check all that apply.

_____ Mentioned in a sermon or teaching
_____ Read about it in a book
_____ Read it in the Bible and I drew conclusions
_____ Was taught in a Bible study or Sunday School
_____ Discussed it with a church leader
_____ Discussed it with someone other than a church leader
_____ Saw it practiced and I drew conclusions
_____ Other: _____

8. Do you have a preference as to who lays hands upon you? _____ Yes _____ No
If yes, please check all that apply:

_____ Clergy _____ People I know
_____ Guest ministers/speakers _____ Members of the church
_____ Church leaders _____ Anyone in attendance
_____ Other : _____

9. Do you allow people who you do not personally know to lay hands on you?

____ Yes ____ No

Briefly Explain.

10. Would you allow people in a non-church setting to lay hands on you (example: alternative medicine)?

____ Yes ____ No

Briefly Explain.

11. Rate the importance of including the laying on of hands in the following contexts, where 1 is not important and 5 is highly important.

	Not Important				Highly Important
	1	2	3	4	5
Blessing					
Ordination					
Commissioning					
Sacraments (i.e. Baptism, Confirmation)					
Healing					
Impartation of Spiritual Gifts					
Infilling of the Holy Spirit					
Empowerment for Service					
Other:					

12. Does your church or group have any protocols, rules, or procedures for laying on of hands?

____ Yes ____ No

If yes, briefly describe.

13. Rate the following statements:

	Strongly Agree	Agree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree	Do Not Know or Not Sure
A. Laying on of hands is not necessary for receiving impartations (blessing, healing, empowerment, reception of spiritual gifts or the Holy Spirit).					
B. Laying on of hands is a transfer agent for impartation. (Something spiritual is being transferred.)					
C. God is the source of all impartations.					
D. Impartations do not depend on the purity/holiness of the person who is laying on hands.					
E. The New Testament tells Christians to lay hands on people.					
F. Doctrine about the laying on of hands should be taught.					
G. All Christians have authority to lay hands on people.					
H. People who desire a specific spiritual gift can receive it by having persons who have that gift lay hands on them.					
I. Laying on of hands must be accompanied by prayer and/or prophecy to be effective.					
J. Non-Christians laying hands on people has no effect.					
K. The only purpose of the laying on of hands is to communicate affirmation, encouragement, or compassion.					
L. Laying on of hands is an act of faith.					

14. Please describe the effect or effects of any experiences that you have seen or personally experienced during or as a result of the prayer and laying on of hands.

15. Please write any other thoughts about laying on of hands you would like to add.

Thank you for your participation.

The following survey is about your experience with the laying on of hands.
Please **do not write your name** on any of the pages.

1. Did you attend the teaching on the topic “Laying on of Hands?” ____ Yes ____ No

2. Gender : ____ Male ____ Female

3. Age: Please check which applies.

____ Under 18
 ____ 18–24
 ____ 25–39
 ____ 40–54
 ____ 55–69
 ____ 70+

4. Church Leader (Examples: pastor, deacon, board member, worship leader,
 Sunday School teacher, home group leader, department head):

____ Yes ____ No

5. Do you have a preference as to who lays hands upon you? ____ Yes ____ No
 If yes, please check all that apply:

____ Clergy	____ People I know
____ Guest ministers/speakers	____ Members of the church
____ Church leaders	____ Anyone in attendance
____ Other : _____	

6. Would you allow people who you do not personally know to lay hands on you?

____ Yes ____ No

Briefly Explain.

7. Would you allow people in a non-church setting to lay hands on you (example:
 alternative medicine)? ____ Yes ____ No

Briefly Explain.

8. Rate the following statements:

	Strongly Agree	Agree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree	Do Not Know or Not Sure
A. Laying on of hands is not necessary for receiving impartations (blessing, healing, empowerment, reception of spiritual gifts or the Holy Spirit).					
B. Laying on of hands is a transfer agent for impartation. (Something spiritual is being transferred.)					
C. God is the source of all impartations.					
D. Impartations do not depend on the purity/holiness of the person who is laying on hands.					
E. The New Testament tells Christians to lay hands on people.					
F. Doctrine about the laying on of hands should be taught.					
G. All Christians have authority to lay hands on people.					
H. People who desire a specific spiritual gift can receive it by having persons who have that gift lay hands on them.					
I. Laying on of hands must be accompanied by prayer and/or prophecy to be effective.					
J. Non-Christians laying hands on people has no effect.					
K. The only purpose of the laying on of hands is to communicate affirmation, encouragement, or compassion.					
L. Laying on of hands is an act of faith.					

9. Rate the importance of including the laying on of hands in the following contexts, where 1 is not important and 5 is the highly important.

	Not Important			Highly Important	
	1	2	3	4	5
Blessing					
Ordination					
Commissioning					
Sacraments (i.e. Baptism, Confirmation)					
Healing					
Impartation of Spiritual Gifts					
Infilling of the Holy Spirit					
Empowerment for Service					
Other:					

10. Check which one applies:

_____ My understanding remains the same as before the teaching.

_____ My understanding has moderately deepened as a result of the teaching.

_____ My understanding has significantly deepened as a result of the teaching.

11. Check which one applies:

_____ I am still somewhat reluctant to participate in laying hands on people.

_____ I am now more confident in my participation in laying hands on others.

_____ I am now significantly more confident about the laying hands on others.

12. Do you believe you received something when someone prayed for you with the laying on of hands?

_____ Yes _____ No

Briefly Explain.

13. Please write any questions, experience, or thoughts about laying on of hands you would like to add.

Thank you for your participation.

APPENDIX C

PRE AND POST-TEACHING QUESTIONNAIRES IN SPANISH

La siguiente encuesta es acerca de la experiencia con la imposición de manos.
Por favor **no ponga su nombre** en ninguna de las páginas.

1. Sexo : _____ Femenino _____ Masculino

2. Grupo de Edad. Por favor escoger el grupo de edad que le pertenece.

_____ Menos 18
 _____ 18–24
 _____ 25–39
 _____ 40–54
 _____ 55–69
 _____ 70+

3. Es Ud. Un Líder de la Iglesia (como por ejemplo: pastor, diácono, miembro de la junta directiva, el culto líder, maestro, líder de grupo, jefe de departamento, etc.):

_____ Si _____ No

4. ¿La iglesia ó el grupo cristiano al que asiste regularmente, practica la imposición de manos? Por favor marque una de las respuestas.

_____ Frecuentemente _____ a veces _____ rara vez _____ Nunca

5. ¿ La iglesia ó el grupo cristiano al que asiste regularmente imparte la enseñanza sobre la imposición de manos? Por favor marque una de las respuestas.

_____ Frecuentemente _____ a veces _____ rara vez _____ Nunca

6. ¿ Personalmenta a tenido la experiencia de la imposicion de manos en su persona?

_____ Si _____ No

Si la respuesta es sí, por favor escoja todas las respuestas que correspondan.

_____ Bendición
 _____ Ordenamiento
 _____ Pedido
 _____ Sacramentos (ejemplos: el Bautismo, la Confirmación)
 _____ Curación
 _____ Recibir el Espíritu Santo
 _____ Reconocimiento de los Regalos Espirituales
 _____ El poder de la Oracion
 _____ Otro

¿Con qué frecuencia?

_____ Frecuentemente _____ a veces _____ rara vez _____ Nunca

7. ¿A Ud. participado alguna vez en la imposición de manos en alguna otra persona?
 ____ Si ____ N Si la respuesta es no, siga al numero 8. Si la respuesta es si,
 marque todas la que correspondan.

____ Bendición
 ____ Ordenamiento
 ____ Pedido
 ____ Sacramentos (ejemplos: el Bautismo, la Confirmación)
 ____ Curación
 ____ Recibir el Espíritu Santo
 ____ Reconocimiento de los Regalos Espirituales
 ____ El poder de la Oracion
 ____ Otro: _____

¿Con qué frecuencia?

____ Frecuentemente ____ a veces ____ rara vez ____ Nunca

7a. Cual es su practica habitual cuando Ud. pone sus manos sobre las
 manos de otra gente para orar por ellos?

Lo hace por que:

____ Es parte de las funciones como cabeza de la iglesia.
 ____ Sólomente cuando se lo pide el encargado.
 ____ Casi siempre.
 ____ Es una parte regular de las oraciones para otros.
 ____ Sólo para curación.
 ____ Para todo tipo de oración.

7b. ¿Cómo adquiero el entendimiento acerca de la puestade las manos para
 imparticion? Por favor marque todos los que correspondan.

____ Lo escucho en un sermón.
 ____ Lo leyo en un libro.
 ____ Lo leyo en la Biblia y saco sus conclusiones.
 ____ Se lo enseñaron en las clases de la Biblia ó Catecismo.
 ____ Lo discutió con un cura ó ministro.
 ____ Lo discutió con alguien mas.
 ____ Vio a alguien hacerlo y saco conclusiones.
 ____ Otro: _____

8. ¿Ud. tiene alguna preferencia en cuanto a quien le imponga las manos?

____ Sí ____ No

Si la respuesta es sí, por favor marque todo los que correspondan:

____ Clero	____ personas que conozco
____ ministros invitados/altavoces	____ los Miembros de la iglesia
____ los líderes de la Iglesia	____ asistencia a nadie
____ Otros: _____	

9. ¿Ud. le permitiría a personas que no conoce personalmente a imponer manos sobre usted?

____ Si ____ No

Por favor explique brevemente.

10. ¿Ud. le permitiría a gente fuera de la iglesia imponer las manos sobre usted (por ejemplo: medicina alternativa)?

____ Si ____ No

Por favor explique brevemente.

11. En una escala del 1 al 5, siendo 5 muy importante y 1 no importante, que importancia tiene para Ud. la inclusión de la imposición de manos. Por favor escoja.

	No es Importante			Muy Importante	
	1	2	3	4	5
Bendición					
Ordenamiento					
Pedido					
Sacramentos (ejemplos: el Bautismo, la Confirmación)					
Curación					
Recibir el Espíritu Santo					
Reconocimiento de los Regalos Espirituales					
El poder de la Oración					
Otro:					

12. ¿Su iglesia o grupo tienen algún protocolo, reglas o procedimientos para la imposición de manos?

____ Sí ____ No Por favor describa brevemente.

13. Que tan de acuerdo esta Ud. con las siguientes opiniones, por favor marque una respuesta:

	Muy de acuerdo	De acuerdo	En desacuerdo	Muy en desacuer do	Otro
A. No es necesario la imposición de las manos para recibir la repartición de bendiciones, curación, recibo de regalos espirituales, poder espiritual, ó al Espíritu Santo.					
B. La imposición de manos es un agente o parte necesaria para la impartación. (Que algo espiritual se está impartiendo.)					
C. Que Dios es el origen de todas las imparticiones.					
D. Que la impartición no depende de la pureza ó santidad de la persona que to imponga las manos.					
E. El Nuevo Testamento le dice a los cristianos a imponer las manos.					
F. Que se debe enseñar acerca de la doctrina la imposición de las manos.					
G. Todos los cristianos tienen la autoridad para imponer las manos sobre otra gente.					
H. Gente que desea un regalo espiritual específico, lo puede recibir si alguien que tiene ese regalo le impone las manos.					
I. La imposición de las manos debe ser acompañado por una oración ó profecía para funcionar.					
J. a imposición de las manos no funciona si la persona no es Cristiana.					
K. El único propósito de la imposición de las manos es para afirmar algo, darle valor a alguien ó por compasión.					
L. La imposición de manos es un acto de fe.					

14. Por favor describa el efecto ó efectos de alguna experiencia que haya visto o experimentado en persona durante o como resultado de la oracion y imposición de las manos.

15. Por favor escriba acerca de cualquier opinion que Ud. tenga acerca de la imposicion de manos que le gustaria agregar.

Gracias por su participación.

La siguiente encuesta es acerca de la experiencia con la imposición de manos.
Por favor **no ponga su nombre** en ninguna de las páginas.

1. ¿Fuistes a la enseñanza sobre el tema "imposición de las manos?" ____ Si ____ No

2. Sexo : ____ Femenino ____ Masculino

3. Grupo de Edad. Por favor escoger el grupo de edad que le pertenece.

____ Menos 18

____ 18-24

____ 25-39

____ 40-54

____ 55-69

____ 70+

4. Es Ud. Un Líder de la Iglesia (como por ejemplo: pastor, diácono, miembro de la junta directiva, el culto líder, maestro, líder de grupo, jefe de departamento, etc.):

____ Si ____ No

5. ¿Ud. tiene alguna preferencia en cuanto a quien le imponga las manos?

____ Sí ____ No

Si la respuesta es sí, por favor marque todo los que correspondan:

____ Clero

____ personas que conozco

____ ministros invitados/altavoces

____ los Miembros de la iglesia

____ los líderes de la Iglesia

____ asistencia a nadie

____ Otros: _____

6. ¿Ud. le permitiría a personas que no conoce personalmente a imponer manos sobre usted? ____ Si ____ No Por favor explique brevemente.

7. ¿Ud. le permitiría a gente fuera de la iglesia imponer las manos sobre usted (por ejemplo: medicina alternativa)?

____ Si ____ No

Por favor explique brevemente.

8. Que tan de acuerdo esta Ud. con las siguientes opiniones, por favor marque una respuesta:

	Muy de acuerdo	De acuerdo	En desacuerdo	Muy en desacuer do	Otro
A. No es necesario la imposición de las manos para recibir la repartición de bendiciones, curación, recibo de regalos espirituales, poder espiritual, ó al Espíritu Santo.					
B. La imposición de manos es un agente o parte necesaria para la impartación. (Que algo espiritual se está impartiendo.)					
C. Que Dios es el origen de todas las imparticiones.					
D. Que la impartición no depende de la pureza ó santidad de la persona que to imponga las manos.					
E. El Nuevo Testamento le dice a los cristianos a imponer las manos.					
F. Que se debe enseñar acerca de la doctrina la imposición de las manos.					
G. Todos los cristianos tienen la autoridad para imponer las manos sobre otra gente.					
H. Gente que desea un regalo espiritual específico, lo puede recibir si alguien que tiene ese regalo le impone las manos.					
I. La imposición de las manos debe ser acompañado por una oración ó profecía para funcionar.					
J. a imposición de las manos no funciona si la persona no es Cristiana.					
K. El único propósito de la imposición de las manos es para afirmar algo, darle valor a alguien ó por compasión.					
L. La imposición de manos es un acto de fe.					

9. En una escala del 1 al 5, siendo 5 muy importante y 1 no importante, que importancia tiene para Ud. la inclusión de la imposición de manos. Por favor escoja.

	No es Importante			Muy Importante	
	1	2	3	4	5
Bendición					
Ordenamiento					
Pedido					
Sacramentos (ejemplos: el Bautismo, la Confirmación)					
Curación					
Recibir el Espíritu Santo					
Reconocimiento de los Regalos Espirituales					
El poder de la Oración					
Otro:					

10. Por favor, escoje el que aplica:

- _____ Mi nivel de conocimiento es el mismo como antes de la enseñanza.
- _____ Mi nivel de conocimiento ha mejorado un poco como resultado de la enseñanza.
- _____ Mi nivel de conocimiento ha mejorado significativamente como resultado de la enseñanza.

11. Por favor, escoje el que aplica:

- _____ Todavía tengo mis reservas en participar en la imposición de manos en la gente.
- _____ Ahora tengo más confianza en mi participación en la imposición de manos sobre otros.
- _____ Ahora estoy mucho más confiado en la imposición de manos sobre otros.

12. ¿Ud. cree que ha recibido algo cuando alguien a rezado por Ud. con la imposición de manos?

_____ Si _____ No Por favor explique brevemente.

13. Por favor, agregue alguna pregunta, experiencia, ó pensamiento acerca de la imposición de manos que Ud. tenga.

Gracias por su participación.

APPENDIX D

FOCUS GROUP DISCUSSION NOTES

Focus Group Notes: Spirit and Life Word Ministries, Passaic, NJ

Date: August 24, 2014

Participation in this focus group is voluntary and verbal consent to participate and use for this project was given by all participants. All participants have been informed as to the purpose of the focus group discussion, how the information will be used, and the fact that confidentiality will be respected. Names may be given aliases or numerical identification in the final document to protect anonymity. Any personal and sensitive information not germane to the project or the topic will be kept strictly confidential and deleted from print matter. Participant name changes are as follows:

SLWM1: Name changed to Ann, testimony name changed to Sister Mary
SLWM2: Name changed to Barbara, testimony name changed to Nancy
SLWM3: Name changed to Charles
SLWM4: Name changed to Dennis
SLWM5: Name changed to Ellen

1. Would you like to share any experiences you have had that involved the laying on of hands before or after the teaching?

Ann gave a testimony of a situation where she used the laying on of hands. She recently prayed for a nun at the nursing home facility where she works. Sister Mary was facing a medical procedure and seemed distraught. Ann asked Sister Mary if she could pray for her, to which Sister Mary agreed. Ann laid hands upon the nun and prayed for her as she was led by the Holy Spirit. The nun began to weep as she was moved by the prayer. After the prayer, Sister Mary asked Ann where she had learned such a beautiful prayer. Ann told her that it was spontaneous as led by the Holy Spirit. Sister Mary was very impressed by that and felt much better after the prayer.

Ann remarked that whenever she has had hands imposed upon her, she always feels like she has received something from God. She stated that she frequently has physical manifestations such as shaking, a sense of heaviness, weeping, laughing, swooning, and tingling. She senses the power of God for impartation. Ann said she also typically lays hands on people when she prays for healing.

Barbara shared the experience she had during the teaching session on the laying on of hands two weeks prior to this focus group. Part of the teaching was a practical application time when the participants were invited to have impartation prayer offered with the laying on of hands. In addition, they were encouraged to pray for one another with the laying on of hands. Barbara was asked to pray with Nancy. Barbara reported that when she prayed with Nancy along with laying on of hands, she was overwhelmed by the power of the Holy Spirit and believed there was a breakthrough for Nancy. A week later, Nancy called her and reported that indeed, the issue for which they prayed had measurably improved. This experience, according to Barbara, encourages her to pray for others and imposing hands during the prayer. Her confidence has increased as to believing for the efficacy of the prayer and ritual of laying on of hands.

2. Do you have any questions about the laying on of hands that you still may have?

Barbara asked about circumstances where people would not welcome the laying on of hands. I responded that sometimes people who have been physically abused may be reluctant to have people touch them, especially people they do not know. To deal with this reluctance, it is helpful to first ask permission to touch. Ann acknowledged that she had never thought of that possibility before and that she just always assumed that if

people allowed her to pray, they would not mind having hands imposed. I shared that in my experience, most people will agree to be touched, especially people who have relationships and friendships, but on very rare occasion, I have had people decline. Asking permission is a simple matter that may prevent an awkward situation or even shortchange a person receiving prayer.

Charles joined the conversation at this point and discussed the fact that people of Hispanic/Latino background are sometimes reluctant to have unfamiliar people lay hands on them because of the *santaria* (spiritism) activities they have seen. These experiences involve a syncretism of Roman Catholicism with ancient traditional tribal religions that had been brought from Africa to French and Spanish-speaking colonies during the slave trade era. Manifestations of *santaria* experiences appear similar to charismatic manifestations and are considered demonic. This confusion generally produces a reluctance of having stranger lay hands on them. Charles is Latino and is also reluctant unless he senses by the Holy Spirit that the person is not demon-influenced. Barbara, also Latina, agreed with Charles and said that she is careful about whom she allows to lay hands on her.

Charles then made a strong point that when he touches people during prayer, he senses a stronger anointing and that he becomes a conduit of the power of God to be efficacious in the target of prayer. Although he believes prayer can be efficacious without hands imposed, he prefers to touch the person for whom he is praying.

3. Was there anything in the teaching that was either new for you or changed your attitudes about the laying on of hands?

Dennis indicated that he appreciated the part of the teaching about protocols of laying on of hands. He felt that it is important to teach people about the laying on of hands, particularly asking the recipients of prayer if they would mind having hands imposed. Dennis relayed the fact that he had been a church-goer all of his life and that he was familiar with the practice of the laying on of hands from a young age, but had rarely, if ever, heard a teaching on this ritual. It was practiced, but never really taught, and people draw their own conclusions about it. He strongly believes that the church needs teaching on this topic.

Dennis then shared about the cultural context of his church upbringing. He stated that he noticed something peculiar in the church. When someone was sick, people would lay hands on him/her and pray. The person would be healed, but then someone else in the congregation would come down with that illness. Dennis said that he asked his mother about this, and she said that some people do not stay filled with the Holy Spirit and leave space in their being for other spirits [spirit of affliction] to attach themselves to them. He concluded that it is important to be filled continually with the Holy Spirit so that no space is given to another spirit. These thoughts have guided him as he approaches having others lay hands on him, and he is, therefore, cautious.

First, Ellen shared that she recalled a particular time when hands were imposed on her and she felt a significant impartation of spiritual gifts and empowerment for her ministry call. She continued to say that she frequently prays for people for healing with the laying on of hands and the recipients received healing. In terms of something she

received from the teaching, she felt that it was very important that people received a biblical basis [part of the teaching] for the practice of the laying on of hands. It gives the person surety that their practice is in agreement with the Word of God, and therefore, is reliable for efficacy. She also noted that hands are the only means we have of touching another person, and that touch conveys care, affirmation, blessing, and the means God uses to transfer impartations.

4. Was the teaching something worthwhile? Did it affect your confidence in praying for people with the laying on of hands?

Each member agreed that it is definitely worthwhile and necessary to teach on this topic and it does increase confidence in their participation in laying hands on people while praying.

All agreed on the following:

- a. Instruction on the laying on of hands is important.
- b. They learned something new about the laying on of hands.
- c. It is an important ritual given by God.
- d. Hands are the conduit of blessing.
- e. Both the person praying and the recipient of prayer receive something during the prayer. The person prayer has the privilege of being a conduit of God's blessing and the recipient receives an impartation from God.
- f. They all feel more confident about laying hands on people during prayer and are more likely to participate.

All felt that they are skeptical about the laying on of hands by non-Christians, particularly in medical setting where energy therapies such as Reiki and Therapeutic Touch are offered.

Focus Group Notes: Heaven's Gate Christian Fellowship, Passaic, NJ

Date: September 14, 2014

Participation in this focus group is voluntary and verbal consent to participate and use for this project was given by all participants. All participants have been informed as to the purpose of the focus group discussion, how the information will be used, and the fact that confidentiality will be respected. Names may be given aliases or numerical identification in the final document to protect anonymity. Any personal or sensitive information not germane to the project or the topic will be kept strictly confidential and deleted from print matter. Participant name changes are as follows:

HGCF1: Name changed to Helen
HGCF2: Name changed to Ingrid
HGCF3: Name changed to Jennifer
HGCF4: Name changed to Kevin
HGCF5: Name changed to Laura

1. Would you like to share any experiences you have had that involved the laying on of hands before or after the teaching?

Kevin's recalled that he has experienced various impartations in multiple contexts, in which he has experienced peace, the presence of the Holy Spirit, and healing. He has also participated in laying hands on others, particularly for healing. Kevin shifted the thought to the importance of the laying on of hands as a doctrine in contexts of sending forth (commissioning) into ministry and confirmation of prophetic words. He raised the view of the ritual as having sacramental importance.

Ingrid picked up the conversation in sharing a negative experience that demonstrated abuse of ministerial power. A minister was particularly aggressive and

forced his hands upon her head with the purpose of pushing her on the floor (simulating falling under the power of the Spirit). She feels that some ministers attempt to manipulate the moves of the Spirit so that manifestations occur; and that these manifestations serve as proof of their anointing and power as ministers. Ingrid states that this is not the intent of the Holy Spirit in impartation and that although this does not occur at HGCF, it is something that needs to be addressed in the Body of Christ at large.

Referencing Psalm 32, Laura feels that one should receive prayer and laying on of hands from godly people. She is somewhat skeptical about people she does not know or people whose lives do not reflect a positive testimony of living life according to God's ways. Laura believes that if one allows anybody to pray and lay on hands, one may not know what is imparted, even the possibility of witchcraft.

Continuing with the conversation of abuses, Helen shared that she, too, has seen pushing people to fall in order to have manifestations of the Spirit. Her own experience is that she has received more impartations without the laying on of hands and that it has been rare with people laying hands upon her. She said that one has to look at the Holy Spirit, not the person.

Along the same lines, Jennifer related experiences where she received impartations and healings, but not everything was from God. She had experiences with witchcraft that became problematic and needed subsequent deliverance. She also experience being pushed to the floor by ministers, and that people need to be led by the Holy Spirit. Jennifer believes one should be aware and know people by their fruit.

2. What are your thoughts about the value of teaching about the laying on of hands?

Laura emphatically said, “This is not a joke.” She strongly agreed that teaching is necessary to discern what is spiritual, as well as what is disorderly, chaos, or routine. One must use wisdom and discernment by the Spirit. Laura described an experience where she discerned that intentions were not holy. Apparently a man asked her to pray and lay hands on him, but she discerned that his intentions were impure, and she asked another man to pray for him instead.

Ingrid also agreed that teaching about this doctrine is important. She emphasized that the Holy Spirit may tell you to embrace someone and healing comes from that. It is always different and so one must listen to the Holy Spirit and be in alignment with the Holy Spirit’s guidance. Listening to God is the key to ministry.

Kevin strongly agreed with the teaching of the doctrine. He stated that the Church (at large), particularly among Charismatics should not be exclusive in what they teach and have no right to bypass what the Bible has to say. He feels that some have a fear or reluctance to teach on the laying on of hands. It is a foundational doctrine and should be taught in every church. Kevin said that blessings do not come because they do not teach the Word of God, which must supersede emotions.

3. If there were something you could change or add to the teaching, what would that be?

One thing she would add is what to do afterwards. What should people do after they have received prayer with the laying on of hands, and sometimes prophetic words? What should people do with either negative or positive impartations?

Helen continued the thoughts of Ingrid and said that after receiving an impartation, one should put into practice what has been received, that is, to manifest and minister that which is received to others. Helen emphasized that there is no fear for the believer because one's life is in the Lord.

A recommendation Laura made is to make the teaching of the doctrine of the laying on of hands available to children and teens, not only to adults, so that they, too, can be partakers of the blessings. She added that it should be particularly taught to new believers with gentleness and sweetness. Laura shared a story of her experience as a new believer. She recounted an event at a time when she had no knowledge of laying on of hands. Apparently, a minister laid hands on her head forcefully and aggressively. Her response was to attack the minister violently to the degree that four ushers had to pull her away. Laura emphasized that she was totally new to this praxis and nobody explained it to her. She responded in a self-protective manner. She also emphasized that she had no understanding of the intent of the minister, and that simply asking her for permission to touch her, or giving her some instruction would have avoided the chaos that followed.

Jennifer agreed with Laura that children and teens should have this teaching. She added that the teaching should include what to do after one has received an impartation through prayer and the laying on of hands. She felt it would be helpful to people to have guidance about what happened to them, and that people receive from the Lord for a purpose.

Kevin stated, "If you don't teach, you don't believe. Christianity is an applied faith." He continued that faith is predicated on God's Word over emotionalism, and that believers need to discern the working of the Holy Spirit. He stated, "We are created for

the Holy Spirit; for the Spirit-led life.” Therefore, the spirit-man needs to be fed. One should always teach before one demonstrates. If there is fear to teach certain things, people will draw their own conclusions.

Focus Group Notes: Summit Church, Hackensack, NJ

Date: October 12, 2014

Participation in this focus group is voluntary and verbal consent to participate and use for this project was given by all participants. All participants have been informed as to the purpose of the focus group discussion, how the information will be used, and the fact that confidentiality will be respected. Names are given aliases and numerical identification to protect anonymity. Any personal sensitive information not germane to the project or the topic will be kept strictly confidential and deleted from print matter.

Participant name changes are as follows:

SC1: Name changed to Melissa
SC2: Name changed to Nancy
SC3: Name changed to Olga
SC4: Name changed to Patty
SC4: Name changed to Robert
SC5: Name changed to Sandy
SC6: Name changed to Tanya
SC7: Name changed to William

1. What would you like to share about your experiences with the laying on of hands either before or after the teaching?

Melissa shared a testimony of receiving prayer just prior to the focus group discussion. The pastor of the church prayed for her with the laying on of hands. She experienced heat on her head and hands and she said that she had never before experienced anything like that. Her experience led to other sharing that they had experienced a variety of manifestations during prayer and the laying on of hands. Nancy shared that she had experiences of a feeling of weightlessness. Robert shared that he

often feels heat on his shoulders as he prays for people. Also, he indicated that people whom he prays for often feel heat in the areas that need healing. Others shared about witnessing people shake, fall, weep, laugh, sweat, and feeling hot or cold during prayer with the laying on of hands. Patty shared incidents in hospitals where she prayed for people as she felt led and that the recipients felt better and were comforted. She also shared how she feels directed by the Lord at times to simply talk to individuals and encourage them.

2. What are your thoughts about the teaching on the laying on of hands?

Tanya shared that she was particularly glad that the teaching had such scriptural grounding. Both William and Tanya feel that it is of utmost importance that whatever is taught needs to be well supported by Scripture. Melissa indicated that she was not aware before the teaching that the laying on of hands had more contexts than for healing. She indicated that she now has new understanding of the functions of the laying on of hands for various impartations.

3. Of the teaching, what was most meaningful for you?

Several of the participants were reared as children in liturgical churches where they witnessed rituals but had no teaching or understanding of the reasons for the rituals. Consequently, they were very appreciative of learning about this ritual. Sandy shared that her background as a child was in a church that practiced rituals like the laying on of hands in sacramental contexts, but she had never had teaching on why they practiced it. It seemed to her it was out of tradition. She was most impressed with having a new and

deeper understanding of the doctrine that explains the ritual of the laying on of hands.

Several agreed that because people join their church from varying backgrounds, teaching on doctrines is important for common understanding.

Robert agreed that this was enormously helpful for him as well. He likened it to having “a form of godliness, but lacking the power thereof.” Robert also noted that he was particularly impressed with the importance of understanding that the source of power and effects of impartations are from God, not the one imposing hands. It is important to keep in mind that with all humility, believers are privileged to partner with God in blessing others. Any positive outcomes are for the glory of God alone.

4. Do you have any questions about the laying on of hands?

Olga brought up the confusion she had experienced in a prior church where cessationism was taught. She has had prophetic experiences, but was told that these are not legitimate and that all of the signs, wonders, miracles, and spiritual gifts spoken of in the New Testament are no longer in operation. Melissa indicated that she had similar experiences with cessationist teaching and it did not seem to coincide with what she had been experiencing. This caused confusion for her as well. The origins and brief summary of differences between cessationism and continuationism was discussed. Each member of the group indicated he/she subscribes to continuationism, believing that the gifts and imperatives of Mark 16:18 are still valid and in operation for the Church today.

5. What would you add to the teaching, if anything?

Nancy suggested that future teaching on spiritual discernment would probably be helpful and the others in the group agreed. All of the participants agreed that the teaching on the doctrine of impartation with the laying on of hands was worthwhile and something that benefits the church. They also indicated that they enjoy this kind of teaching and they feel encouraged to participate in prayer for others with the laying on of hands.

APPENDIX E
TEACHING MATERIALS



The Laying on of Hands, an Elementary Doctrine

BY

EVA BENEVENTO

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Why study about the laying on of hands?

Hebrews 6:1-3 says,

Therefore leaving the **elementary teachings** about the Christ, let us press on to maturity, not laying again a foundation of repentance from dead works and of faith toward God, of instruction about washings, and **laying on of hands**, and the resurrection of the dead, and eternal judgment. And this we shall do, if God permits (Hebrews 6:1-3, NASB, highlights added).

The laying on of hands is an elementary and foundational doctrine of the Church and therefore, should be taught to all believers. It is a gesture used during prayer for someone. Prayer with the laying on of hands is used in several circumstances including ordination and commissioning, dedications, prayer for healing, prayer for impartation of the Holy Spirit baptism, prayer for impartation of gifts and blessing.

Where is the laying on of hands in the Bible?

The action of the laying on of hands can be found in both the Old and New Testaments in a variety of contexts including blessing, consecration, absolution of sin, commissioning, empowerment, healing, and infilling of the Holy Spirit. In a negative context, the laying on of hands is used in accusation of guilt.

Table 1 Old Testament References to The Laying on of Hands

Scripture Reference	Context
Gen. 48:14	Patriarchal blessing – Israel (Jacob) blesses Manasseh and Ephraim, the children of Joseph
Lev. 3:2, 8, 13	Sacrificial peace offering
Lev. 4:4, 15, 24, 29, 33; Lev. 8:14; Exod. 29:10; Num. 8:12; 2 Chron. 29:13	Sacrificial sin offering
Lev. 1:4; Lev. 8:18, 22; Exod. 29:15; Num. 8:12	Sacrificial burnt offering
Lev. 8:22; Exod. 29:19 Lev. 16:21	Ram of ordination (consecration of priests) Yom Kippur (Day of Atonement)
Num. 8:10	Consecration of Levites
Num. 27:18; Deut. 34:9	Commissioning of Joshua
Lev. 24:14	Passing of a sentence on accused
2 Kings 5:11	Naaman expecting a healing
Sus. v. 34 (Apocrypha)	Susanna accused of adultery

Table 2 New Testament References to the Laying on of Hands

Scripture Reference	Context
Mark 1:20-31; Matt. 8:14-15; Luke 4:38, 39	Jesus heals Peter's mother-in-law
Mark 1:32-34; Matt. 8:16; Luke 4:40-41	Jesus heals in Capernaum
Mark 3:9-11; Luke 6:19	Jesus heals at the Sermon on the Mount
Mark 5:25-34; Matt. 9:20-22; Luke 8:44-48	Jesus heals woman with issue of blood
Mark 5:22-43; Matt. 9:18-26; Luke 8:41-56	Jesus raises Jairus' daughter from the dead
Mark 6:1-6; Matt. 13:53-58; Luke 4:16-30	Jesus heals a few in Nazareth
Mark 6:56; Matt. 14:35-36	Jesus healing at Gennesaret
Mark 7:31-37	Jesus heals the man deaf
Mark 8:22-26	Jesus heals blind man in Bethesda
Mark 10:13-16; Matt. 19:13-15; Luke 18:15-17	Jesus blessing the children
Luke 13:10-17	Jesus heals woman - illness is caused by a spirit
Luke 4:40	Jesus heals all before going to the "lonely place"
Luke 24:50-53	Jesus blesses the disciples
Acts 6:1-6	Appointment of deacons
Acts 8:4-25	Samaritans receive the Holy Spirit
Acts 9:11-17	Paul is healed and is filled with the Holy Spirit
Acts 13:1-3	Commissioning of Saul and Barnabas
Acts 14:23	Appointment of elders
Acts 19:1-6	Ephesians receive the Holy Spirit
1 Tim. 4:14; 2 Tim. 1:6	Ordination of Timothy
1 Tim. 5:22	Ordination or accusation of sinners (interpretations differ)
Heb. 6:2	Laying on of hands as elementary doctrine

Why do people extend hands in prayer?

In some churches, while someone is being prayed for, the congregation is asked to extend their hands in the person's direction as a sign of agreement in prayer. Sometimes objects and spaces are dedicated for the use of the Lord's work and congregations are asked to extend hands in prayers of dedication and blessing. While no specific requirement to do so is stated in the Bible, churches follow the pattern found in the Bible. Raising hands in worship is an ancient posture used in prayer and blessing, and is evidenced in scripture (Neh. 8:6; Ps. 63:4; Ps. 134:2; Ps. 143:6; Isa. 1:15). The pattern extending hands to bless

or petition can be found in the following verses: Lev. 9:22; 1 Kings 8:22, 38, 54; 2 Chron. 6:12,13, 29; Ps. 28:2.

What happens when someone prays and lays hands on another person?

Impartations through scriptural prayer and the laying on of hands can vary. It can be the impartation of blessing, baptism of the Holy Spirit, spiritual gifts, healing, commissioning, or empowerment. The substance of the impartation originates with God, not the person imposing hands. The role of hands as a transfer agent communicates a three-way connection and agreement between the recipient, the person imposing hands, and God. In addition to impartation, people respond to touch in the sense that it can communicate compassion, affirmations and encouragement. Even witnessing someone being prayed for with the laying on of hands is an opportunity to extend faith and agreement for the substance of the prayer.

Some people experience physical manifestations (examples: heat, sweating, electricity-like tingling, swooning, falling, sense of heaviness, shaking, laughing, weeping), and some do not. Some people receive prophetic words along with prayer; some do not. The work of the Holy Spirit is for individuals as the Spirit wills (1 Cor. 12:11), and therefore, is beyond the scope of human manipulation. In the case of healing, simply inquiry will tell the degree of healing that is received and if necessary, prayer can be repeated. Sometimes healing is not felt and can only be determined by follow-up medical procedures, and sometimes healing is gradual over time.

What is impartation?

Laying on of hands carries with it impartation and transference, whether to bless, heal, assign authority, receive the Holy Spirit and *charismata* (spiritual gifts), commission works, or ordain ministers. Impartation simply defined is the act of giving or communicating something. Transference is the act of moving something from one source to another. The two words appear closely related, except that transfer seems to imply a medium or conduit in the process of moving a thing or idea from one source to the recipient. During the laying on of hands for imparting a blessing, healing, or charismatic gift, spiritual substance is communicated and transferred from God as the source, to a person through another person.

What if physical manifestations do not appear to be happening when someone is being prayed for?

Physical manifestations of the power of the Holy Spirit are not necessarily evidence of impartation. The power of God is not in the manifestation, but rather the manifestations are human responses to the power of God. If a person does not have physical manifestations, it does not mean they have not received something from God. Faith in praying for someone or receiving from God often plays a role, but the sovereignty of God is primary. God is omniscient (all knowing), omnipresent (present every where), and omnipotent (all powerful). The Holy Spirit is present in the Church to guide and empower people to hear God's Will and do it. Therefore, all of the spiritual gifts in

operation originate with God. People respond to impartations in different ways that are not predictable.

Can someone receive healing or spiritual impartations without the laying on of hands?

Impartations can occur with or without the laying on of hands. The New Testament gives several examples of Jesus healing without the laying on hands.

- Jesus healed by speaking when exorcism was involved (Mark 5:8; Luke 8:29; Matt. 8:32; Mark 9:25; Matt. 17:18; Luke 9:42).
- Jesus healed by His Word (Matt. 9:6; Mark 2:11; Luke 5:24; John 5:8; Matt. 12:13; Mark 3:5; Luke 6:10; Luke 17:14).
- Jesus used spittle and touched the blind (Mark 7:33-34; Mark 8:23-25; John 9:6-7).
- Jesus also healed some who were not in His presence (John 4:50; Matt. 8:13; Mark 7:29).

On the day of Pentecost, those who were in the Upper Room received the infilling of the Holy Spirit (Acts 2:1). No mention of the laying on of hands is in that event, but subsequently, the Samaritans received the infilling of the Holy Spirit with the laying on of hands (Acts 8:4-25) as did the Ephesians (Acts 19:1-6). Healings without the laying on of hands through the ministries of the early believers (Acts 5:15; Acts 8:7), but they also occurred with hands imposed (Acts 28:8). On the road to Damascus, Paul experienced a powerful encounter with God without the laying on of hands, and then when he arrived in Damascus, Ananias prayed for Paul's healing with the laying on of hands and prophecy. Here is a case where Paul had two powerful encounters. On the first, no hands were imposed, and on the second they were. The laying on of hands is one of several methods God uses as a transfer agent for impartation, but it is an important one and should not be ignored.

Who should lay hands on people for impartation?

James 5:13 states that the sick should call the elders of the church to anoint them with oil and pray for healing. In Mark 16:18, after His Resurrection, Jesus commissions believers to lay hands on the sick for healing. In Acts 13:1-3, the prophets and teachers laid hands on Barnabus and Saul (Paul) to commission them. Paul was used to impart a spiritual gift to Timothy. Traditionally, church leaders have exercised authority to lay hands on people for impartations and ordinations. However, all believers have authority given to them by Jesus to lay hands on the sick and expect a healing. All believers also have authority to pray for and bless people.

What kinds of gifts (*charismata*) does the Holy Spirit impart?

Besides the indwelling gift of the Holy Spirit, God's gifts are specifically mentioned in 1 Cor. 12:8-10 (word of wisdom, word of knowledge, faith, healing, effecting of miracles,

prophecy, distinguishing spirits, tongues, interpretations of tongues) and in Romans 12:6-8 (prophecy, service, teaching, exhortation, leading, mercy). Additional ones are mentioned in 1 Cor. 12:28 (apostles, prophets, teachers, helps, administrations) and Ephesians 4:11 adds evangelists and pastors to the list. However, 1 Cor. 12:4-6 implies that God has even more gifts that are not mentioned, which certainly in keeping with God's nature as an extravagant giver. These gifts are manifestations of the Holy Spirit given for the common good (1 Cor. 12:7) and distributed to individuals according to the Will of the Spirit (1 Cor. 12:11).

If a person is seeking a specific gift, can he/she find people having that gift and have them lay hands on him/her to have that particular gift imparted?

To seek a specific gift by having a person having that gift and expecting that specific gift to be imparted is on shaky ground because the gift originates from the Holy Spirit according to the Spirit's Will (1 Cor. 12:11). People do not impart the gifts; God is doing the imparting. People act as vessels of transfer. Moses laid hands on Joshua for his commissioning as the next leader of Israel, and Elisha received a similar gift in prophetic ministry as his mentor Elijah, but although having some similarities, neither the ministry of Joshua, nor that of Elisha, were totally identical to their mentors. The empowerment they received was unique to their lives and the people they blessed. Their impartations originate with the giver of gifts, the Holy Spirit.

In Romans 1:11, Paul does state, "I may impart some spiritual gift to you," but it does not imply that a person's specific gift can be imparted by that person, nor does it identify the gift. It simply states that Paul would impart a spiritual gift, and that it has general purpose of blessing, including blessing himself, as indicated by verse 12. The implication is that Paul is used as a vessel to impart spiritual gifts in cooperation with the Holy Spirit, but the gifts do not originate with him.

Seeking an anointed vessel to pray for an impartation of whatever God chooses to impart seems more in line with respecting the sovereignty of the Holy Spirit. Choosing God's impartations is not in mankind's domain. God's plans and purposes for each individual are personalized just as each individual is uniquely created, and therefore, God's gifts, calling, and impartations to individuals are of God's wisdom and choosing. That being said, often people seek out others having similar gifts or calling as themselves simply because people are comfortable with what is familiar or seek to intensify what they have. Consequently, it may appear that they are receiving the same impartations by having those they seek pray for them. That may or may not happen. God is sovereign and it is the Holy Spirit who imparts, not people. It must also be emphasized that if someone prays for another person to receive an impartation of gifts, their own gifts are not diminished. In other words, they do not lose some of their gift by praying for impartation for another person.

In praying for healing, is it required to touch the place of injury?

The Bible does not give any specific instructions about where to place hands when praying for healing. Although it is not required, it has become common practice, to lay hands on the affected area of sickness. Sometimes people hold hands or touch the person's head or shoulder, but care should be exercised in keeping with modesty and cultural traditions. Please see "Protocols for Touch" for common sense guidelines that are helpful, respectful, and modest.

Can you receive something evil by someone laying hands and praying for you?

It is not advisable to allow Christians or non-Christians to **purposefully** lay hands on you in **non-Christian meditative forms**, even with the intent of positive outcomes (see next question on "energy therapies"). This does not invite God's authentic impartations, and even more importantly, may invite other spiritual beings that have the potential to be harmful both spiritually and physically. Just as angels are real, demons are also real (see Acts 8 and 19). By opening oneself up to spiritual entities, you may unwittingly invite unholy entities into your life. This does not mean that submitting to "energy therapies" guarantees demonic influence, but rather the potential for it exists. Therefore, it is simply unwise to purposefully expose oneself to such activity.

Should a Christian participate in meditative touch "energy" therapies that are not Christian (i.e. Reiki, Therapeutic Touch)?

Energy touch therapies that have become popular and are even used in hospitals have been widely studied. Studies have repeatedly debunked these "energy" therapies as having no scientific proof of what they claim. Whereas they do produce a calming effect in some but not all people, they do not heal. These therapies have the same outcome as the placebo effect where people feel better because they mentally expect to feel better. Placebo is a powerful human element in which positive attitudes are helpful in feeling better and even healing faster, but it does not heal. Furthermore, because humans are social beings, touch can communicate warmth, comfort, and acceptance, which have a positive effect on people, but again, touch alone does not heal.

Five concerns are central to the issue of participation in these therapies.

1. Health caregivers are perceived in a positive light and patients are not likely to question therapies that are offered. Patients assume and expect medical professionals to use scientifically verified curative outcomes and often do not question their procedures or therapies.
2. These "energy" therapies are based in non-Christian Eastern mystic religious systems. Even health caregivers are not always aware of the spiritual foundations of these therapies and may even put themselves at risk of inviting spiritual experiences that are unholy.
3. Informed consent is at issue in hospital or therapeutic settings. Patients

are frequently not informed about the sources of these therapies or about the efficacy that has been studied by legitimate researchers. Consequently, patients agree without full knowledge because they trust the medical personnel. This is a professional ethics issue that has not yet been resolved.

4. Equivocation is problematic. The spiritual foundations of these therapies are given new scientific sounding names and theories. Therefore, the patient assumes and believes that it is a medically proven therapy because of its medical setting and scientific sounding names. Medical jargon is used to describe a process that is not medical or even real.
5. The potential of charlatans preying on unsuspected people who are suffering should also not be dismissed. The promise of relief of pain is a strong motivator and opens the potential for people to be victimized.

In the few cases of pain or anxiety relief, it can be readily explained by “placebo effect,” which is the tendency of people feeling better because they expect to feel better, not because the therapy actually helped. In consideration of these five concerns, it is apparent that participation in energy therapies is risky at best and probably should be avoided. Christian prayer for the sick with the laying on of hands is distinctly different in that it has biblical foundations, sound theological foundations, invites the power of God to heal, and seeks to be curative without inviting the possibility of unwanted spiritual activity from the demonic realm.

As a follower of Christ, is the laying on of hands something that I should do?

Consider these verses of Scripture (highlights added):

“These signs will accompany those **who have believed: in My name** they will cast out demons, they will speak with new tongues; they will pick up serpents, and if they drink any deadly *poison*, it will not hurt them; **they will lay hands on the sick, and they will recover** (Mark 16:17-18, NASB).”

“Behold, **I have given you authority** to tread on serpents and scorpions, and over all the power of the enemy, and nothing will injure you (Luke 10:19).”

“You did not choose Me but **I chose you, and appointed you** that you would go and bear fruit, and *that* your fruit would remain, so that whatever you ask of the Father **in My name** He may give to you (John 15:16, NASB).”

“and the **prayer offered in faith will restore** the one who is sick, **and the Lord will raise him up**, and if he has committed sins, they will be forgiven him. Therefore, confess your sins to one another, and **pray for one another** so that you may be healed. The **effective prayer of a righteous man can accomplish much** (James 5:15-16, NASB).”

It is abundantly clear that Christian believers can and should pray for one another effectively, and that the laying on of hands is a gesture available to all Christian believers in the process of praying for others, especially, but not exclusively for healing. Praying for others with the laying on of hands for blessing, healing, Holy Spirit baptism, or receiving spiritual gifts is available to all believers.

Love in Action

The laying on of hands is not a meaningless gesture, but rather one that God gave to humanity and one that God values to the degree that He gave instructions for its use. The laying on of hands speaks of the compassion of the Lord for humanity and the compassion that His people should extend to others. God has given the gesture of the laying on of hands to touch for healing the suffering considered untouchable by humanity, to touch the hidden places of the heart where pain is released, to touch for affirmation and blessing, and to touch for the release of the gifts God has for His people. The laying on of hands is love in action.

Common Sense Protocols for Touch

➤ Respect Church Protocols

In some churches and denominations, only church leaders or designated people are allowed to lay hands on the congregants, particularly on their heads. In some ethnic cultures, it is considered rude to touch a person's head in any context. Respecting the culture of a church or of an ethnic community is a way of honoring them. Be mindful and observant of cultural norms.

➤ Permission to Touch

It is wise to always ask permission to touch a person or inform the group about the practice before doing so. Some people have experienced battering and do not like being touched, and others may just be uncomfortable with this practice. Do not push people or impose hands on people who are resistant. Be respectful of people's openness to being touched. Some people like to hug. By all means, it can be a special moment of connecting, but be especially cautious when hugging involves the opposite sexes. Full frontal close hugging between members of the opposite sex may communicate something other than intended, and consequently, should be avoided.

➤ Where to Touch

When praying for healing, it is common practice to touch the area of affliction if it is specific to an area of the body. This is not a requirement and wisdom should be exercised. Arms, legs from the knee down, shoulders, neck, and head are usually safe. Anywhere in the torso is sensitive and should be respected, particularly private areas. Praying for persons of the opposite sex needs special care. Another person of the same gender may be asked to lay hands on the person being prayed for and the one praying

lays hands on top of that other person's hands. Be also mindful not to touch open sores, bleeding, or wounds. When praying for impartation of charismatic gifts, touching the person's shoulders, hands, or head is typical practice, but again, adhering to the cultural or church regulations if there are any is appropriate.

➤ **Let Modesty Prevail**

Physical manifestations sometimes occur when people experience the power of God while being prayed for. These manifestations may include swooning, falling down, shaking, quivering, weeping, laughing, and more. If someone is falling, help the person land safely either on the floor or a chair. Reposition them if they are potentially in harms way of furniture or other people. Cover their torso with a modesty cloth if such is available. Use good common sense in protecting the modesty of yourself and others.

➤ **Be Sensitive to the Holy Spirit**

Most important of all, everyone concerned should be sensitive to the directions and leading of the Holy Spirit.

APPENDIX F

OUTCOME DATA TABLES

Church: Spirit and Life Word Ministries

Number of responses, gender, and age are shown as raw numbers.
Other data are shown as percentage of those who participated in the questionnaires.
All percentage calculations are rounded to the tenths decimal place, not truncated.

Table F.1. SLWM Background Data

Background Data	Pre-T	Post-T
Number of Responses	21	9
Gender: Male	5	3
Female	16	6
Age: <18	0	0
18-24	0	0
25-39	4	1
40-54	9	5
55-69	7	2
70+	1	1
Church Leader - Yes	33%	22%
No	67%	78%
Church practices LoH - Frequently	86%	
Occasionally	14%	
Rarely	0%	
Never	0%	
Church teaches LoH - Frequently	62%	
Occasionally	24%	
Rarely	5%	
Never	5%	
No response	4%	
Church has LoH protocols - Yes	57%	
No	43%	
How understanding about LoH was acquired		
Mentioned in a sermon or teaching	67%	
Read about it in a book	67%	
Read about it in the Bible and drew conclusions	57%	
Was taught in a Bible study or Sunday School	48%	
Discussed it with a church leader	14%	
Discussed it with someone other than church leader	19%	
Saw it practiced and I drew conclusions	38%	
Other	10%	

Number of responses, gender, and age are shown as raw numbers.
Other data are shown as percentage of respondents.
Pre-T = Before the teaching event
Post-T = After the teaching event
Change is shown as positive or negative percentage.

Table F2. SLWM Respondents' Pre-T Experiences

Question	Pre-T
Experienced LoH	
Yes - Blessing	95%
Ordination	10%
Commissioning	29%
Sacraments (i.e. Baptism, Confirmation)	24%
Healing	95%
Infilling of the Holy Spirit	67%
Impartation of Spiritual Gifts	86%
Empowerment for Service	38%
Other	10%
No	0
Participated in LoH on others	
Yes - Blessing	67%
Ordination	0
Commissioning	5%
Sacraments (i.e. Baptism, Confirmation)	5%
Healing	71%
Infilling of the Holy Spirit	71%
Impartation of Spiritual Gifts	29%
Empowerment for Service	19%
Other	0
No	19%
If yes, how often?	
Frequently	19%
Occasionally	57%
Rarely	10%
Never	0
Typical practice	
As part of church leadership function	10%
Only when asked to do so by church leaders	14%
Almost always; regular prayer for others	19%
Only for healing	10%
For all kinds of prayer	67%

LoH = Laying on of Hands

Data listed are percentage of respondents.

Table F.3. SLWM Respondents' Preferences

Question	Pre-T	Post-T	+ -
Preference for who imposes hands			
Any clergy	57%	33%	-24%
Guest minister	57%	83%	+26%
Church leaders	50%	83%	+33%
People I know	38%	67%	+29%
Members of the church	38%	67%	+29%
Anyone	7%	17%	+10%
Other	7%	0	0
No Preference	50%	33%	-17%
Allow unfamiliar people to LoH			
Yes	57%	67%	+10%
No	43%	33%	+10%
Allow people in non-church settings to LoH			
Yes	24%	22%	-2%
No	67%	78%	+11%

Data listed are percentages of respondents.

Table F.4: SLWM Opinions/Understandings Regarding the Laying on of Hands

	5	5	+ -	4	4	+ -	3	3	+ -	2	2	+ -	1	1	+ -
A	19	33	+24	14	33	+19	48	0	-48	14	22	+8	0	11	+11
B	52	55	+3	38	44	+6	0	0	0	10	0	-10	0	0	0
C	71	78	+7	5	11	+6	10	0	0	14	11	-3	0	0	0
D	24	0	-24	29	33	+4	29	44	+15	10	22	+11	10	0	-10
E	57	56	-1	33	33	0	5	0	-5	5	0	-5	0	11	+11
F	71	67	-4	19	33	+14	5	0	-5	0	0	0	5	0	-5
G	71	55	-16	14	33	+19	10	0	-10	0	0	0	10	11	+1
H	38	33	-5	33	33	0	14	11	-3	0	11	+11	14	11	-3
I	43	56	+13	33	11	-22	19	11	-8	5	11	+6	0	11	+11
J	43	22	-21	19	33	+14	19	0	-19	5	22	+17	10	22	+12
K	14	22	+8	14	22	+8	48	33	-15	19	22	+3	0	0	0
L	67	56	-11	33	44	+11	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0

Data listed are percentages of respondents.

5 = Strongly Agree; 4 = Agree; 3 = Disagree; 2 = Strongly Disagree; 1 = Do Not Know or Not Sure; + - = Difference between percentages

First entry in each scale value = percentage of Pre-T

Second entry in each scale value = percentage of Post-T

Letters A through L = Statements on Item 13 on questionnaires:

A. Laying on of hands is not necessary for receiving impartations (blessing, healing, empowerment, reception of spiritual gifts or the Holy Spirit).

B. Laying on of hands is a transfer agent for impartation. (Something spiritual is being transferred.)

C. God is the source of all impartations.
D. Impartations do not depend on the purity/holiness of the person who is laying on hands.
E. The New Testament tells Christians to lay hands on people.
F. Doctrine about the laying on of hands should be taught.
G. All Christians have authority to lay hands on people.
H. People who desire a specific spiritual gift can receive it by having persons who have that gift lay hands on them.
I. Laying on of hands must be accompanied by prayer and/or prophecy to be effective.
J. Non-Christians laying hands on people has no effect.
K. The only purpose of the laying on of hands is to communicate affirmation, encouragement, or compassion.
L. Laying on of hands is an act of faith.

Table F.5. SLWM Rating of Importance of Laying on of Hands in Contexts

Contexts for Laying on of Hands	1	1	2	2	3	3	4	4	5	5
Blessing	0	0	0	0	5	33	5	22	90	44
Ordination	0	0	0	0	0	22	5	0	81	67
Commissioning	0	0	0	0	0	11	10	11	71	67
Sacraments	5	0	0	0	0	22	5	44	81	67
Healing	0	0	0	0	0	22	5	11	95	67
Infilling of Holy Spirit	0	0	5	0	0	0	5	22	90	78
Impartation of Spiritual Gifts	0	11	0	0	0	0	5	11	95	78
Empowerment	0	0	0	0	5	0	10	11	86	78

Scale Range: 1 = Not Important; 5= Highly Important

First entry in each scale value = percentage of Pre-T respondents

Second entry in each scale value = percentage of Post-T respondents

Table F.6. SLWM Post-Teaching Attitudes

Post-T Attitudes	Responses		
Attitude about Understanding of Impartation After Teaching Event	Same 11%	Moderately Deeper 22%	Significantly Deeper 57%
Willingness to participate in laying on of hands in future occasions	Reluctant 11%	More Confident 57%	Significantly Confident 22%
Belief something was received during application phase of teaching (LoH)	Yes 100%	No 0%	No Response 0%

Data listed are percentage of respondents.

Church: Heaven's Gate Christian Fellowship

Number of responses, gender, and age are shown as raw numbers.
Other data are shown as percentage of those who participated in the questionnaires.
All percentage calculations are rounded to the tenths decimal place, not truncated.

Table F.7. HGCF Background Data

Background Data		Pre-T	Post-T
Number of Responses		34	22
Gender: Male		13	11
Female		21	11
Age:	<18	3	1
	18-24	1	2
	25-39	10	5
	40-54	12	10
	55-69	6	3
	70+	1	0
Church Leader: Yes		62%	50%
No		41%	50%
Church practices LoH:	Frequently	56%	
	Occasionally	35%	
	Rarely	3%	
	Never	3%	
Church teaches LoH:	Frequently	32%	
	Occasionally	32%	
	Rarely	18%	
	Never	15%	
Church has LoH protocols: Yes		47%	
No		41%	
No response		12%	
How understanding about LoH was acquired:			
Mentioned in a sermon or teaching		18%	
Read about it in a book		18%	
Read about it in the Bible and drew conclusions		41%	
Was taught in a Bible study or Sunday School		26%	
Discussed it with a church leader		6%	
Discussed it with someone other than church leader		6%	
Saw it practiced and I drew conclusions		15%	
Other		12%	

Number of responses, gender, and age are shown as raw numbers.
Other data are shown as percentage of respondents.
Pre-T = Before the teaching event
Post-T = After the teaching event
Difference is shown as positive or negative percentage.

Table F.8. HGCF Respondents' Pre-T Experiences

Question	Pre-T
Experienced LoH:	
Yes: Blessing	82%
Ordination	15%
Commissioning	24%
Sacraments (i.e. Baptism, Confirmation)	56%
Healing	44%
Infilling of the Holy Spirit	65%
Impartation of Spiritual Gifts	35%
Empowerment for Service	44%
Other	9%
No	0%
Participated in LoH on others:	
Yes: Blessing	62%
Ordination	9%
Commissioning	24%
Sacraments (i.e. Baptism, Confirmation)	15%
Healing	53%
Infilling of the Holy Spirit	24%
Impartation of Spiritual Gifts	21%
Empowerment for Service	41%
Other	12%
No	24%
If yes, how often?	
Frequently	24%
Occasionally	35%
Rarely	12%
Never	3%
Typical practice:	
As part of church leadership function	18%
Only when asked to do so by church leaders	9%
Almost always; regular prayer for others	24%
Only for healing	12%
For all kinds of prayer	32%

LoH = Laying on of Hands

Data listed are percentage of respondents.

Table F.9. HGCF Respondents' Preferences

Question	Pre-T	Post-T	+ -
Preference for who imposes hands:			
Any clergy	15%	23%	+8%
Guest minister	24%	23%	-1%
Church leaders	38%	36%	-2%
People I know	6%	27%	+21%
Members of the church	21%	18%	-3%
Anyone	18%	0%	-18%
Other	0%	3%	+3%
No Preference	50%	41%	-9%
Allow unfamiliar people to LoH:			
Yes	32%	41%	+9%
No	56%	64%	+8%
Allow people in non-church settings to LoH:			
Yes	15%	18%	+3%
No	79%	82%	+3%

Data listed are percentage of respondents.

Table F.10. HGCF Opinions/Understandings Regarding the Laying on of Hands

	5	5	+ -	4	4	+ -	3	3	+ -	2	2	+ -	1	1	+ -
A	26	32	+6	26	5	-21	18	9	-9	15	5	-5	0	5	+5
B	24	41	+17	30	36	+5	12	9	-3	9	0	-9	0	0	0
C	62	73	+11	12	9	-3	6	5	-1	0	0	0	0	0	0
D	21	27	+6	9	32	+23	30	18	-12	9	9	0	6	5	-1
E	24	41	+17	41	41	0	0	9	+9	6	0	-6	6	5	-1
F	32	45	+13	35	32	-3	3	9	+6	0	0	0	6	0	-6
G	24	41	+17	26	32	+6	21	9	-12	3	5	+2	3	5	+2
H	12	23	+11	24	32	+8	30	27	-3	9	9	0	0	5	+5
I	24	23	-1	21	32	+11	24	23	-1	6	9	+3	3	5	+2
J	12	18	+6	12	14	+2	35	36	+1	6	23	+17	15	5	-10
K	6	5	-1	9	41	+32	47	27	-20	9	5	-4	3	9	+6
L	53	68	+15	18	23	+5	6	5	-1	3	0	-3	3	5	+2

Data listed are percentage of respondents.

5 = Strongly Agree; 4 = Agree; 3 = Disagree; 2 = Strongly Disagree; 1 = Do Not Know or Not Sure; + - = Difference between percentages

First entry in each scale value = percentage of Pre-T

Second entry in each scale value = percentage of Post-T

Letters A through L = Statements on Item 13 on questionnaires:

A. Laying on of hands is not necessary for receiving impartations (blessing, healing, empowerment, reception of spiritual gifts or the Holy Spirit).

B. Laying on of hands is a transfer agent for impartation. (Something spiritual is being transferred.)

C. God is the source of all impartations.
D. Impartations do not depend on the purity/holiness of the person who is laying on hands.
E. The New Testament tells Christians to lay hands on people.
F. Doctrine about the laying on of hands should be taught.
G. All Christians have authority to lay hands on people.
H. People who desire a specific spiritual gift can receive it by having persons who have that gift lay hands on them.
I. Laying on of hands must be accompanied by prayer and/or prophecy to be effective.
J. Non-Christians laying hands on people has no effect.
K. The only purpose of the laying on of hands is to communicate affirmation, encouragement, or compassion.
L. Laying on of hands is an act of faith.

Table F.11. HGCF Rating of Importance of Laying on of Hands in Contexts

Context	1	1	2	2	3	3	4	4	5	5
Blessing	3	5	9	5	3	14	0	27	62	59
Ordination	3	0	3	5	12	14	3	27	47	45
Commissioning	0	0	6	5	21	5	0	32	35	36
Sacraments	3	5	3	5	3	18	6	9	50	55
Healing	3	5	0	0	3	5	3	14	59	68
Infilling of Holy Spirit	6	5	0	0	3	5	3	23	59	64
Impartation of Spiritual Gifts	6	5	0	5	6	5	6	18	47	59
Empowerment	6	5	0	5	6	5	6	23	56	55
Other	0	0	3	0	0	0	0	0	15	5

Scale Range: 1 = Not Important; 5= Highly Important

First entry in each scale value = percentage of Pre-T respondents

Second entry in each scale value = percentage of Post-T respondents

Table F.12. HGCF Post-Teaching Attitudes

Post-T Attitudes	Rating		
Understanding of Impartation after Teaching Event	Same 5%	Moderately Deeper 36%	Significantly Deeper 59%
Willingness to participate in future	Reluctant 23%	More Confident 50%	Significantly Confident 27%
Belief something was received during application phase of teaching (LoH)	Yes 77%	No 9%	No Response 14%

Data listed are percentage of respondents.

Church: Summit Church

Number of responses, gender, and age are shown as raw numbers.
Other data are shown as percentage of those who participated in the questionnaires.
All percentage calculations are rounded to the tenths decimal place, not truncated.

Table F.13. SC Background Data

Background Data		Pre-T	Post-T
Number of Responses		42	38
Gender: Male		20	20
Female		22	18
Age:	<18	0	2
	18-24	3	1
	25-39	17	15
	40-54	9	9
	55-69	8	6
	70+	5	5
Church Leader: Yes		31%	26%
No		67%	71%
Church practices LoH:	Frequently	62%	
	Occasionally	33%	
	Rarely	5%	
	Never	0%	
Church teaches LoH:	Frequently	26%	
	Occasionally	48%	
	Rarely	19%	
	Never	2%	
Church has LoH protocols: Yes		14%	
No		52%	
No response		24%	
How understanding about LoH was acquired:			
Mentioned in a sermon or teaching		40%	
Read about it in a book		21%	
Read about it in the Bible and drew conclusions		33%	
Was taught in a Bible study or Sunday School		36%	
Discussed it with a church leader		17%	
Discussed it with someone other than church leader		19%	
Saw it practiced and I drew conclusions		50%	
Other		10%	

Number of responses, gender, and age are shown as raw numbers.
Other data are shown as percentage of respondents.
Pre-T = Before the teaching event
Post-T = After the teaching event
Difference is shown as positive or negative percentage.

Table F.14. SC Respondents' Pre-T Experiences

Question	Pre-T
Experienced LoH:	
Yes: Blessing	79%
Ordination	10%
Commissioning	12%
Sacraments (i.e. Baptism, Confirmation)	36%
Healing	74%
Infilling of the Holy Spirit	55%
Impartation of Spiritual Gifts	24%
Empowerment for Service	21%
Other	5%
No	0%
Participated in LoH on others:	
Yes: Blessing	64%
Ordination	5%
Commissioning	19%
Sacraments (i.e. Baptism, Confirmation)	12%
Healing	62%
Infilling of the Holy Spirit	29%
Impartation of Spiritual Gifts	14%
Empowerment for Service	24%
Other	2%
No	5%
If yes, how often?	
Frequently	14%
Occasionally	43%
Rarely	21%
Never	5%
Typical practice:	
As part of church leadership function	14%
Only when asked to do so by church leaders	19%
Almost always; regular prayer for others	14%
Only for healing	19%
For all kinds of prayer	62%

LoH = Laying on of Hands

Data listed are percentage of respondents.

Table F.15. SC Respondents' Preferences

Question	Pre-T	Post-T	+ -
Preference for who imposes hands:			
Any clergy	19%	42%	+23%
Guest minister	26%	50%	+24%
Church leaders	33%	47%	+14%
People I know	31%	45%	+14%
Members of the church	17%	34%	+17%
Anyone	0%	5%	+5%
Other	4%	3%	-1%
No Preference	48%	42%	-6%
Allow unfamiliar people to LoH:			
Yes	76%	21%	-55%
No	24%	47%	+23%
Allow people in non-church settings to LoH:			
Yes	52%	34%	-18%
No	40%	66%	+26%

Data listed are percentage of respondents.

Table F.16. SC Opinions/Understandings Regarding the Laying on of Hands

	5	5	+ -	4	4	+ -	3	3	+ -	2	2	+ -	1	1	+ -
A	26	32	+6	31	45	+14	12	8	-4	14	11	-3	7	5	-2
B	36	39	+3	43	50	+7	10	3	-7	0	3	+3	2	5	+3
C	71	63	-8	10	18	+8	7	5	-7	0	5	+5	2	5	+3
D	19	26	+7	43	42	-1	14	13	-1	5	8	+3	12	11	-1
E	40	45	+5	36	37	+1	0	0	0	0	0	0	19	16	-3
F	40	50	+10	45	39	-6	5	3	-2	0	0	0	5	8	+3
G	43	47	+4	31	42	+11	10	5	-5	5	3	-2	7	3	-4
H	17	18	+1	26	32	+6	21	21	0	17	8	-9	21	21	0
I	21	24	+3	38	37	-1	24	24	0	7	8	+1	2	8	+6
J	17	8	-9	17	24	+7	24	37	+13	17	8	-9	19	18	-1
K	12	11	-1	24	21	-3	31	47	+16	21	18	-3	7	3	-4
L	60	68	+8	29	29	0	5	0	-5	2	0	-2	0	3	+3

Data listed are percentage of respondents.

5 = Strongly Agree; 4 = Agree; 3 = Disagree; 2 = Strongly Disagree; 1 = Do Not Know or Not Sure; + - = Difference between percentages

First entry in each scale value = percentage of Pre-T

Second entry in each scale value = percentage of Post-T

Letters A through L = Statements on Item 13 on questionnaires:

A. Laying on of hands is not necessary for receiving impartations (blessing, healing, empowerment, reception of spiritual gifts or the Holy Spirit).

B. Laying on of hands is a transfer agent for impartation. (Something spiritual is being transferred.)

C. God is the source of all impartations.
D. Impartations do not depend on the purity/holiness of the person who is laying on hands.
E. The New Testament tells Christians to lay hands on people.
F. Doctrine about the laying on of hands should be taught.
G. All Christians have authority to lay hands on people.
H. People who desire a specific spiritual gift can receive it by having persons who have that gift lay hands on them.
I. Laying on of hands must be accompanied by prayer and/or prophecy to be effective.
J. Non-Christians laying hands on people has no effect.
K. The only purpose of the laying on of hands is to communicate affirmation, encouragement, or compassion.
L. Laying on of hands is an act of faith.

Table F.17. SC Rating of Importance of Laying on of Hands in Contexts

Context	1	1	2	2	3	3	4	4	5	5
Blessing	2	0	2	0	12	8	7	34	69	55
Ordination	7	5	2	0	12	16	10	26	50	50
Commissioning	7	5	14	3	14	16	0	21	43	53
Sacraments	5	5	0	8	14	5	10	32	50	39
Healing	5	0	0	0	2	8	5	21	76	61
Infilling of Holy Spirit	5	0	0	0	5	18	17	21	60	55
Impartation of Spiritual Gifts	5	0	0	0	2	18	7	24	76	53
Empowerment	2	0	2	3	10	13	17	34	55	45
Other	2	3	2	0	5	0	5	3	10	8

Scale Range: 1 = Not Important; 5= Highly Important

First entry in each scale value = percentage of Pre-T respondents

Second entry in each scale value = percentage of Post-T respondents

Table F.18. SC Post-Teaching Attitudes

Post-T Attitudes	Rating			No Response
Understanding of Impartation after Teaching Event	Same 26%	Moderately Deeper 56%	Significantly Deeper 13%	5%
Willingness to participate in future	Reluctant 13%	More Confident 64%	Significantly Confident 18%	5%
Belief something was received during application phase of teaching (LoH)	Yes 90%	No 5%		5%

Data listed are percentage of respondents.

Combined Data

Number of responses, gender, and age are shown as raw numbers.
Other data are shown as percentage of those who participated in the questionnaires.
All percentage calculations are rounded to the tenths decimal place, not truncated.

Table F.19. Combined Background Data

Background Data		Pre-T	Post-T
Number of Responses		97	69
Gender: Male		38	34
Female		58	35
Age: <18		3	3
18-24		4	3
25-39		31	21
40-54		30	24
55-69		21	11
70+		7	6
Church Leader: Yes		41%	23%
No		56%	46%
Church practices LoH:	Frequently	65%	
	Occasionally	30%	
	Rarely	3%	
	Never	1%	
Church teaches LoH:	Frequently	36%	
	Occasionally	37%	
	Rarely	15%	
	Never	7%	
Church has LoH protocols: Yes		35%	
No		46%	
No response		14%	
How understanding about LoH was acquired:			
Mentioned in a sermon or teaching		38%	
Read about it in a book		30%	
Read about it in the Bible and drew conclusions		41%	
Was taught in a Bible study or Sunday School		35%	
Discussed it with a church leader		12%	
Discussed it with someone other than church leader		14%	
Saw it practiced and I drew conclusions		35%	
Other		10%	

Number of responses, gender, and age are shown as raw numbers.
Other data are shown as percentage of respondents.
Pre-T = Before the teaching event
Post-T = After the teaching event
Difference is shown as positive or negative percentage.

Table F.20. Combined Respondents' Pre-T Experiences

Question	Pre-T
Experienced LoH:	
Yes: Blessing	83%
Ordination	11%
Commissioning	20%
Sacraments (i.e. Baptism, Confirmation)	40%
Healing	68%
Infilling of the Holy Spirit	61%
Impartation of Spiritual Gifts	41%
Empowerment for Service	33%
Other	7%
No	0%
Participated in LoH on others:	
Yes: Blessing	64%
Ordination	5%
Commissioning	17%
Sacraments (i.e. Baptism, Confirmation)	11%
Healing	61%
Infilling of the Holy Spirit	27%
Impartation of Spiritual Gifts	20%
Empowerment for Service	29%
Other	5%
No	12%
If yes, how often?	
Frequently	19%
Occasionally	43%
Rarely	15%
Never	3%
Typical practice:	
As part of church leadership function	14%
Only when asked to do so by church leaders	14%
Almost always; regular prayer for others	19%
Only for healing	14%
For all kinds of prayer	53%

LoH = Laying on of Hands

Data listed are percentage of respondents.

Table F.21. Combined Respondents' Preferences

Question	Pre-T	Post-T	+ -
Preference for who imposes hands:			
Any clergy	22%	33%	+11%
Guest minister	28%	42%	+14%
Church leaders	35%	45%	+10%
People I know	21%	39%	+18%
Members of the church	20%	30%	+10%
Anyone	7%	4%	-3%
Other	5%	6%	+1%
No Preference	45%	41%	-4%
Allow unfamiliar people to LoH:			
Yes	57%	33%	-24%
No	39%	35%	-4%
Allow people in non-church settings to LoH:			
Yes	33%	28%	-5%
No	60%	72%	+12%

Data listed are percentage of respondents.

Table F.22. Combined Opinions/Understandings Regarding the Laying on of Hands

	5	5	+ -	4	4	+ -	3	3	+ -	2	2	+ -	1	1	+ -
A	25	32	+7	26	30	+4	22	7	-15	15	10	-5	3	6	+3
B	35	42	+7	37	45	+8	8	4	-4	5	3	-2	1	4	+3
C	68	58	-10	9	23	+14	7	6	-1	3	6	+3	1	4	+3
D	21	23	+2	36	37	+1	23	19	-4	7	10	+3	9	7	-2
E	38	45	+7	37	37	0	1	3	-2	3	0	-3	10	12	+2
F	44	51	+7	36	36	0	4	4	0	0	0	0	5	4	-1
G	42	46	+4	26	37	+11	13	6	-7	3	3	0	5	4	-1
H	20	22	+2	28	32	+4	23	22	-1	6	9	+3	12	14	+2
I	27	28	+1	31	32	+1	23	22	-1	6	9	+3	2	7	+5
J	21	13	-8	15	23	+8	27	32	+5	10	14	+4	15	14	-1
K	10	10	0	16	28	+12	40	39	-1	16	13	-3	4	4	0
L	59	67	+8	26	29	+3	4	1	-3	2	0	-2	1	3	+2

Data listed are percentage of respondents.

5 = Strongly Agree; 4 = Agree; 3 = Disagree; 2 = Strongly Disagree; 1 = Do Not Know or Not Sure; + - = Difference between percentages

First entry in each scale value = percentage of Pre-T

Second entry in each scale value = percentage of Post-T

Letters A through L = Statements on Item 13 on questionnaires:

A. Laying on of hands is not necessary for receiving impartations (blessing, healing, empowerment, reception of spiritual gifts or the Holy Spirit).

B. Laying on of hands is a transfer agent for impartation. (Something spiritual is being transferred.)

C. God is the source of all impartations.
D. Impartations do not depend on the purity/holiness of the person who is laying on hands.
E. The New Testament tells Christians to lay hands on people.
F. Doctrine about the laying on of hands should be taught.
G. All Christians have authority to lay hands on people.
H. People who desire a specific spiritual gift can receive it by having persons who have that gift lay hands on them.
I. Laying on of hands must be accompanied by prayer and/or prophecy to be effective.
J. Non-Christians laying hands on people has no effect.
K. The only purpose of the laying on of hands is to communicate affirmation, encouragement, or compassion.
L. Laying on of hands is an act of faith.

Table F.23. Combined Rating of Importance of Laying on of Hands in Contexts

Context	1	1	2	2	3	3	4	4	5	5
Blessing	2	1	4	1	7	13	4	30	71	59
Ordination	4	3	2	1	9	16	6	23	56	51
Commissioning	3	3	2	3	13	12	8	23	46	49
Sacraments	4	4	1	6	7	12	7	22	57	48
Healing	3	1	0	0	2	9	5	17	74	49
Infilling of Holy Spirit	4	1	0	0	4	12	10	22	63	46
Impartation of Spiritual Gifts	4	3	1	1	2	12	5	20	73	58
Empowerment	3	1	1	4	7	9	11	28	62	37
Other	1	1	2	0	2	0	2	4	43	7

Scale Range: 1 = Not Important; 5= Highly Important

First entry in each scale value = percentage of Pre-T respondents

Second entry in each scale value = percentage of Post-T respondents

Table F.24. Combined Post-Teaching Attitudes

Post-T Attitudes	Rating			No Response
Understanding of Impartation after Teaching Event	Same 17%	Moderately Deeper 45%	Significantly Deeper 33%	5%
Willingness to participate in future	Reluctant 16%	More Confident 58%	Significantly Confident 22%	4%
Belief something was received during application phase of teaching (LoH)	Yes 87%	No 6%		7%

Data listed are percentage of respondents

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